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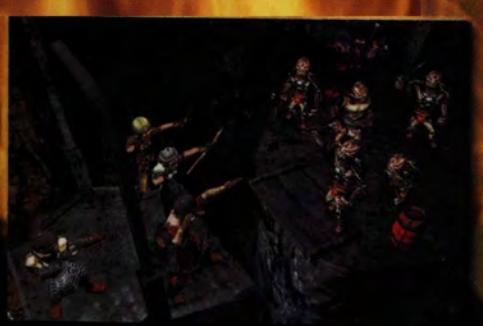

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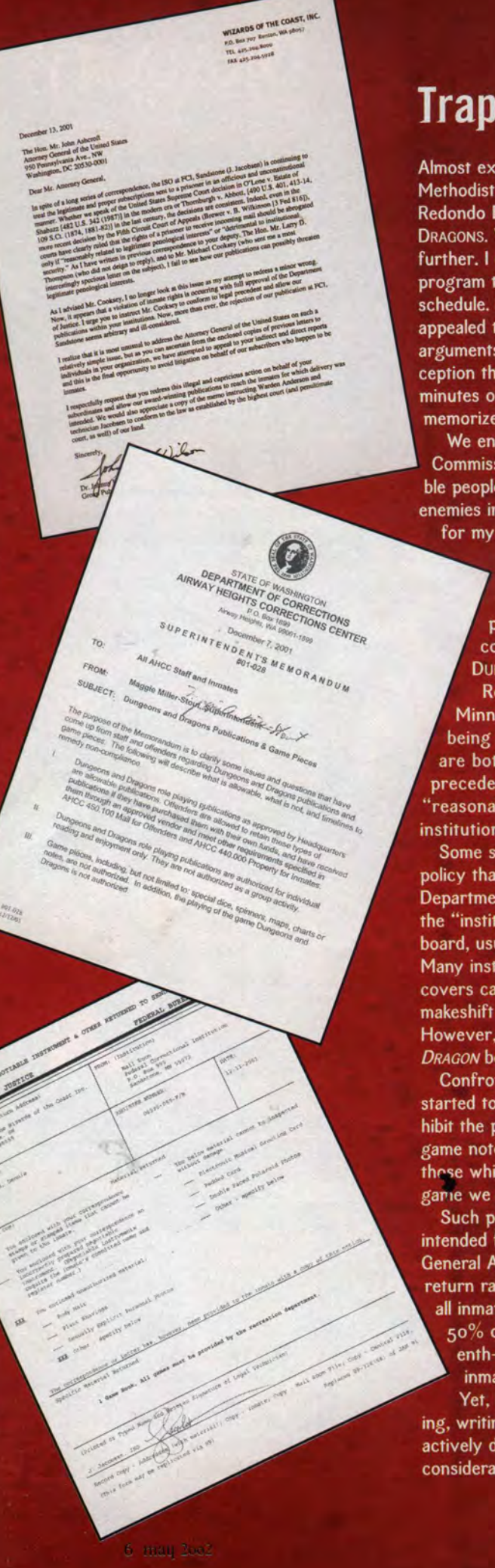
ON THE COVER
Todd Lockwood's original painting for the 1999 DRAGONLANCE calendar illustrates the horrors of a castle siege. Astute readers will also recognize how Todd's interpretation of a 2nd edition dragon foreshadowed the look of 3rd edition dragons.

Trapped In Real Dungeons



Almost exactly 20 years ago, I became a very unpopular Baptist minister. A Methodist minister who served on the Recreation and Parks Commission for Redondo Beach, California asked me if I knew anything about DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. When I told him that I had played the game, he began to interrogate me further. I discovered that the Recreation and Parks Department of our city had a program that included games, and that roleplaying games were part of the schedule. Unfortunately, several groups of fundamentalist church members had appealed to the commission to ban the game from this recreation program. Their arguments ranged from the idea that it made teenagers suicidal to the misconception that when the *Player's Handbook* (1st Edition, page 40) said it took 15 minutes of time to memorize a 1st-level spell, it took 15 minutes of *real* time to memorize that spell.

We ended up winning that battle at both the Recreation and Parks Commission level and later, at the City Council level, partially because responsible people stood up for the kids who wanted to play. I ended up making some enemies in the Baptist denomination as a result, but I told the truth and stood up for my fellow hobbyists. I would do so, even today.

All of us have heard of our favorite roleplaying game being thrown out of schools, libraries, and recreation programs. All of us have occasionally been discriminated against because we play roleplaying games. Yet, there is one segment of roleplayers that is constantly discriminated against. Some of them are forbidden to play DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. This is the prison population.

Recently, we've heard from prisoners in Georgia, Washington, and Minnesota that their copies of *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON* magazines were being illegally withheld. I use the term "illegally withheld" because there are both U.S. Supreme Court precedents and U.S. Fifth Court of Appeals precedents against withholding an inmate's mail when such an action is not "reasonably related to legitimate penological interests" or "detrimental to institutional security."

Some such institutions hide their illegal revocation of inmate rights under the policy that all games must be purchased by and owned by the Recreation Department of the institution. In general, this might be a legitimate policy under the "institutional security" argument. A board game such as *Monopoly®* has a board, usually of stiff stock roughly analogous to that on a hardbound book. Many institutions do not allow hardbound book covers because hardbound book covers can be ripped off, folded into a shape with a sharp point and used as a makeshift knife. Game boards could be converted into weapons in the same way. However, it is very difficult to imagine a map out of *DUNGEON* or a poster from *DRAGON* being converted into a weapon in the same way.

Confronted with their illegal activities, the authorities at one prison have started to allow inmates to possess DUNGEONS & DRAGONS publications, but prohibit the playing of D&D and the possession and use of dice, maps, charts, or game notes. In short, they use their power of proscribing game pieces—even those which couldn't be used as a weapon—to stop inmates from playing the game we all love.

Such policies are actually detrimental to the purpose of prisons. Prisons are intended for rehabilitation, as well as punishment. Unfortunately, though a 1993 General Accounting Office study reported that literacy programs reduce the return rate among juvenile offenders by 20% or more, often as many as 50% of all inmates are illiterate. A 1998 study in California showed that not only were 50% of all inmates illiterate, but those who could read only averaged a seventh-grade reading level. This is in spite of the California law that requires inmates to be educated to a ninth-grade reading level prior to their release.

Yet, here are prisons actively discouraging an activity that promotes reading, writing, communication, and use of the imagination. Here are prisons actively discouraging an activity that subtly encourages simple mathematical considerations and working well with others.

What's wrong with this picture? None of us are in it! No one is standing up for the rights of inmates to experience a game that will encourage reading, writing, and arithmetic. No one is standing up for the rights of inmates to read magazines and books that stimulate the imagination. No one is standing up for these prisoners who might have their potential for rehabilitation increased as a result of enjoying the game we all love.

What does this have to do with a *DRAGON* reader who obeys the law and doesn't expect to end up in prison? Plenty! Civil rights are a strange thing. Just when we think something doesn't affect us, it does. First, we don't stand up for others. Then, we discover that our library, our school, our workplace, or our community retailers won't allow DUNGEONS & DRAGONS products to be read or sold on their premises. Our mailman decides not to deliver *DRAGON* or *DUNGEON* because he doesn't like the evil look of a monster's face or the implied use of magic. (Something similar to this has happened when Infocom Software advertised *Enchanter* on the back of *Boy's Life* magazine. The local Boy Scouts didn't get their copies of that issue until someone reported the violation to the postmaster.) We can't get the right security clearance to accept a federal position because we play D&D. I hear you saying, "That won't ever happen." But if the authorities are allowed to ignore the law in dealing with one part of their population, they will eventually be able to ignore the law in dealing with another part of the population: you.

I have personally written to the wardens of the individual institutions where I am aware of this injustice taking place. I have also written to Mr. Michael Cooksey, the Assistant Director of the U.S. Department of Justice in charge of the Correctional Programs Division, the Honorable Mr. Larry D. Thompson, Deputy Attorney General of the United States (Mr. Cooksey's boss), and the Honorable Mr. John Ashcroft, Attorney General of the United States (Mr. Thompson's boss).

I urge you to write to the authorities at the following addresses and simply state that you believe that it is wrong to forbid prisoners to play DUNGEONS & DRAGONS. It's not coddling the incarcerated to allow them to use reading skills, writing skills, simple math skills, and their imaginations; not when it might help them to become good citizens when they are released, not when it might keep us from having to pay the average $25,000-$35,000 per year it usually costs to keep a prisoner incarcerated.

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The Hon. Mr. Larry D. Thompson
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Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

The Hon. Mr. John Ashcroft
Attorney General of the United States
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20530-0001

"Building more prisons to address crime is like building more graveyards to address a fatal disease."—Robert Gangi, Executive Director, Correctional Association of New York

DRAGON

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The first part of the year has been an interesting time for DRAGON. *The occasional playtest features have received lots of attention, none more so than the "Monsters with Class" article in issue #293. Most folks are quick to tell us that the ECLs are a bit too high, and many of our own staff members suspected as much. However, the feedback has been very helpful in validating internal playtest results and clarifying what most gamers think about the concept of using monsters as player races. Thanks folks; we appreciate it.*

This issue shifts gears a little, focusing on the strongholds of the characters and the villains that oppose them rather than on the characters themselves. Although there's no specific playtest feature in this issue, we're really interested in hearing about what kinds of strongholds players are actually using. So, tell us about your strongholds and how you use them.

Too Much Class

First off, let me say that the "Monsters with Class" article was a great idea! Secondly, what the heck are you thinking? A dog has an ECL 3? A Centaur has an ECL 7? A skeleton has an ECL 5, and small elementals an ECL 6 or 7?

I would love to see these again once you set them to something reasonable.

Think! An ECL 3 indicates that a Dog is equivalent to having 3 levels in rogue, ranger, wizard, or fighter. Does that seem right to you? A dog has scent, but it can't use weapons, it can't ride, it can't use any skills that require manual dexterity, heck, it can't speak! That's worth 3 levels?

You have a fantastic idea here; sit down and flesh it out.

Dallas Dopko
Address withheld

There's no doubt that some of the ECLs are off, but that's why we're looking for feedback. When constructing the initial set of ECLs, the R&tD folks were conservative in their estimates, knowing that DMs have an easier time increasing a weaker character's power than they do reigning in a character made too powerful by a monster race.

Remember too, that the animals are all awakened–that dog you describe can talk and has an extra 2 HD.

The ECLs are sure to be reworked based on the feedback from readers. (Many internal playtesters began making similar comments while the magazine was being printed, so R&tD is working on the issue right now.)

How'd You Do It?

I recently received *DRAGON* #293 and was delighted to find that you had created ECLs for so many monsters. I love to let my players play monsters to make my game more interesting, as long as I can keep it balanced.

However, I noticed that the ECLs in your magazine had significantly increased from the monster ECLs in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide,* and I found them very difficult to play. I also noticed that some things seemed to be out of proportion, such as a riding dog having an ECL equal to that of a ghost, and a vampire spawn having a greater ECL than a vampire. I don't know what you're basing your ECLs on, but in my campaigns, they simply don't seem to be working very well. They're weakening my players too much. I suggest trying other ways to determine ECLs, or comprise balanced variants to help DMs choose the level adjustments for monsters depending on what kind of campaign they're running. Another good idea is to explain exactly how ECLs are determined. This way DMs can judge for themselves what the ECL of a monster should be, and monsters other than the ones you mentioned can be played.

Joseph Lanzendorfer
Address withheld

For now, ECLs are a matter of playtesting and careful estimation, so the more feedback on the topic, the better.

LA or Bust?

Two of the articles presented in *DRAGON* #293, "Monsters with Class" and "The Elemental Planetouched," deal with adjusting starting levels of "monster" PCs. However, the former article uses Effective Character Level (ECL), while Mr. Reynolds's article uses Level Adjustment (LA). I also notice that Mr. Reynolds's article on Saurials in the previous issue uses the Level Adjustment system as well.

I was under the impression that ECL was going to be the "official" method for handling monster PCs in the new edition of D&tD. It's a lot more clearly explained than the general guidelines in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* and is used throughout the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* book. Now I see the ECL system being ditched in favor of the Level Adjustment system in two articles that each deal with races from the FORGOTTEN REALMS setting.

I guess I don't understand this. Is there some fundamental difference between ECL and LA that I'm missing? If not, wouldn't it be easier on players and DMs if a single terminology or concept was used? If this is a matter of debate, my vote would be to stick with ECL, and also to include ECL in the entries that appear in the upcoming *Monster Manual II;* ECL

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should be a standard part of any monster description, as far as I am concerned.

Name and address withheld

The confusion in those articles represents legitimate efforts to clarify both terms. According to the folks in R&D, the new standard is simply that ECL (Effective Character Level) is synonymous with character level. For monsters, ECL represents the total level of the monster; that is the sum of the monster's Hit Dice plus level adjustment and class levels. For example, a monster with 3 Hit Dice, special powers that give it a +1 level adjustment, and 2 levels of rogue would have an ECL of 6. Future articles will reflect and explain the terms in this way.

Geekfest 2002

I am impressed with what you have done recently with your magazine. I've been buying *DRAGON* for about five years, and in that time, I have scrambled to pick up as many back issues as possible. I now have copies of *DRAGON Magazine* that were published long before I was born (1980), and as cool as some of them are, I'm amazed every month at how you keep improving.

It's a good time to be a gamer, as we seem to be living in a geek renaissance: *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* dominate the movie theaters, *Star Wars* books, films, and paraphernalia are incredibly successful, and even Marvel Comics and Alan Moore seem to be setting aside their disputes for the greater good of the comics community.

Leading the way through all of this seems to be Wizards of the Coast, uniting the previously divided hobbies of card gaming, roleplaying, and table-top wargaming into one cohesive community.

My point? One of the richest men on the planet (Bill Gates) is a geek, the *Spiderman* movie promises to be as good as *X-Men* was, anime is becoming almost mainstream, and some of the most successful and popular shows on television (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Angel, Smallville, The Simpsons,* and *Malcolm in the Middle*) are aimed at and about "geeks." If you keep it up, gamers are, despite decades of horrible press, going to have a hobby that they can be proud of.

Clinton J. Boomer • Macomb, Il

Few people outside the company know that many Wizards of the Coast employees booked a meeting on our internal time-management software (and corresponding time out of the office) coinciding with the release of The Fellowship of the Ring *more than a year and a half in advance. It's not true that there was an internal lobby to change "Tuesday" to "Buffyday" on that same software. It is indeed a great time to be a geek.*

Balancing Act

Akin to what Jason J. Sitcosky relayed in *DRAGON* #292, I too feel that your magazine has changed dramatically in the transition to 3rd Edition. Not to say that the modifications weren't entirely necessary, but I feel that *DRAGON* is walking a fine line in appealing too heavily to the power-gaming demographic with the tone and nature of its articles.

I am a gamer who has been around for a great deal of time, like many of your loyal fans. For a long while, I resisted 3rd Edition because I felt that a new edition of the game was unwarranted. At the time, several published works had recently been released that were organizing the massive swath of materials that existed for 2nd Edition. It seemed to me ridiculous that in the face of those much-needed upgrades (such as the

DRAGON Magazine #296

Dragonslayers!

Bring the wagon! *DRAGON Magazine* has a hoard of dragon and dragonslayer game information you'll treasure! Prepare your character for a fight with a dragon by taking levels of the dragonslayer prestige classes presented in this issue. Build the best dragonslayer from the ground up using dragonslayer class combos. But if you can't beat 'em, join 'em using creepy new monster cultist prestige classes.

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Inside you'll also find new fiction from Thomas Harlan, "Class Acts," "Faiths of Faerûn," "Bazaar of the Bizarre," and "Elminster's Guide to the Realms." And as always, you'll find advice, tools, and tactics to improve your game!

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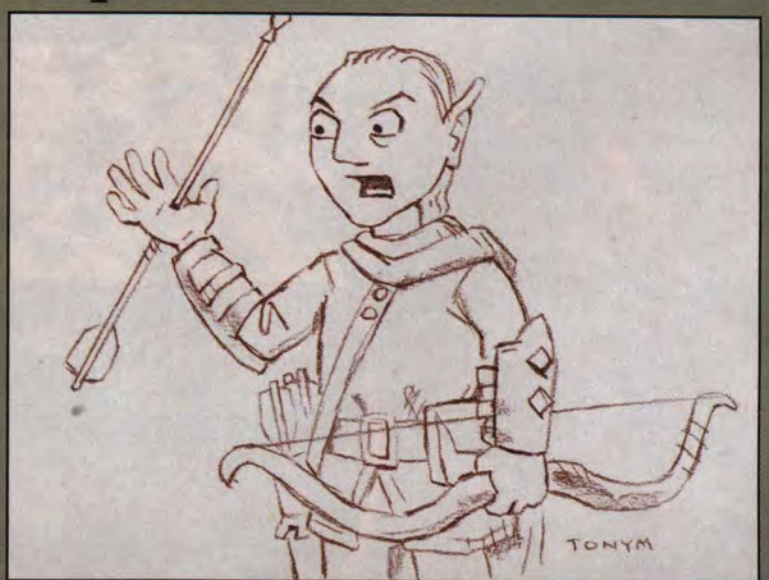

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Nodwick
by Aaron Williams
WHEW! WE FINALLY DEFEATED THE ICKY-FACE WARTLORD CURMITT D'AMPHIBE!
YEP! WE SMASHED HIS GARRISON, BROKE HIS DEFENSES, AND YEAGAR IS FLYING OUR FLAG FROM THE CASTLE'S HIGHEST TOWER!
OUR FLAG LOOKS A WHOLE LOT LIKE NODWICK'S PANTS TO ME...
WHAT AN AMAZING COINCIDENCE...

Spell Compendium or *Encyclopedia Magica*), Wizards of the Coast would undo it all with an entirely new game. It was absurd, actually, to expect such loyal customers to invest all over again. Such is the evil of capitalism, I guess.

Later, I relented, only to find that 3rd Edition was a marvelous, intricate, yet learnable game that embodied much of what I loved about roleplaying games on the whole: cool tactics combined with neat little rules to cover all situations. That said, all those rules mean nothing in the face of what must drive a campaign capable of holding my interest—the story. When I explained to my new girlfriend what D&D was, I told her it was an interactive novel played in installments. I would have been embarrassed to say it was a tactical game with little figures and dice that I play with the most socially inept people I know.

My interest will not be held by twists that produce power characters. In my opinion, this only validates immature people who cannot be substantial or vital in real life. A character does not have to be weak to be well roleplayed, but if the story demands weakness, then weakness must prevail. Gary Gygax seems to think (or used to anyway, just read the 1st Edition *Dungeon Master's Guide*) that amateur thespianism was something ridiculous that wouldn't be tolerated at a table of "serious gamers." I think what that opinion is lacking is the perspective of time; Gary wouldn't be able to recall half the stories he does about his old campaigns if the narrative wasn't prominent. Pretending to be an actor at the table doesn't necessarily mean the experience will be memorable, but rather, having everyone accomplish something notable does. This generally takes a little focus and a moderate concern for playing your part at the table.

I would hope that *Dragon* realizes that it must balance its appeal to both younger and older gamers and the varying facets that appeal to them within the game. The former are the game's future, but the later are the people with the real money to spend on this ever more expensive hobby. Catering too heavily to only one of these groups merely cheapens the game for everyone.

Doug Ironside • Barrie, Ontario Canada

Dragon focuses on material that's usable at the gaming table. That means that there's going to be a balancing act between things like new feats and more esoteric topics like roleplaying advice. However, useful doesn't mean overpowering, which is why the new edition focuses on modular and balanced rules.

Prestigious Classes

In the last year, I have become an avid reader of *Dragon Magazine* and find the art to be some of the best I've seen in any magazine. However, I have a question about the prestige classes you publish. I'd like to say that I love 99 percent of the prestige classes you present, and the other 1 percent I still find interesting. My question is: What determines whether a prestige class has 10 levels to it or 5?

When I first saw prestige classes in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, it seemed that they would all be 10 levels, but then the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* book provided prestige classes with only 5 levels. When I started reading your magazine I also noticed that your prestige classes had 10 levels, but now occasionally there are 5-level prestige classes. An example of this would be issue #292, where you provide four new prestige classes, but only one of them (the Darkwood Stalker) has 10 levels.

I love your magazine, I just want to know the secret to determining the levels of a prestige class. Thanks for all the hard work you guys do.

Kevin Jones • Ontario, CA

That is really in the hands of the authors, but the guideline is that a 10-level class represents an entirely new focus, a complete career change if you will, but a 5-level class represents a new interest or path, rather than a complete abandonment of the previous class. In general, 10-level classes represent a greater commitment on the part of the character.

Most of the time (unlike this month's installment) the "Class Acts" and "Faiths of Faerûn" columns will feature 10-level classes, while our features section will feature groups of related 5-level classes.

Cavern Tiles

I just purchased *Dragon* #293, and I wanted to let you know that I loved the cavern tiles insert. Anthony

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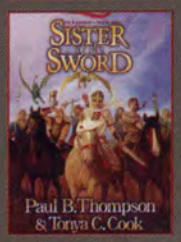

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Watters did a beautiful job, and the supplemental notes on page 22 were a great contribution.

These tiles were a huge improvement over the ones in several earlier issues of *Dragon* this past year. I would, of course, love to see more of this quality of tiles in future issues.

Walt McAtee • Lexington, KY

We dig the tiles too, and we've got something pretty cool coming up that might make them even better. The short version is that the tiles in #297 will tie together the cavern tiles from issue #293 and the stone tower tiles from this issue. All three sets of tiles will work perfectly by themselves of course, but if you have two (or even all three) of the tile sets, you'll get a little bonus.

Cover That Cover!

Enough! I enjoy roleplaying games, and D&D and *Dragon Magazine* in particular. I'd love to share my hobby with those who are unfamiliar with it. So *why* do you have to periodically use risqué and/or gory imagery, particularly on the cover?

The cover for issue #293 would have been fine, nice even, had the "world builder" been wearing a decent shirt, or even a standard bathing suit. I want to be able to leave *Dragon* on my coffee table without shame. I want someday to share it with my kids—*before* they are 21! Had I not received it as part of my subscription, I would not have picked up this issue. Which would have been a shame, because I would have missed some particularly good features, including a telling "Dork Tower."

Dragon is supposed to be the premier source of monthly material for D&D. If it is going to attract a larger audience, it should be suitable for all ages. Even the Harry Potter series draws some controversy. Why shoot yourself in the foot by implying that exposed skin is the next step? There are other "fantasy magazines" for that. Please, I want heroics, adventure, and saving the day. Not "hot elf super-babes chained up by the evil overlord!"

Trevor Salla • West Chester, PA

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"Hey, where the hell did you get a pearl bracelet?"

Congratulations Joshua Walker!
Colorado City, TX

OTHER, CANADIAN, WINNER

"When your father said that there would be cutbacks, I never imagined him getting axed. He was the branch manager."

Trevor Ingram
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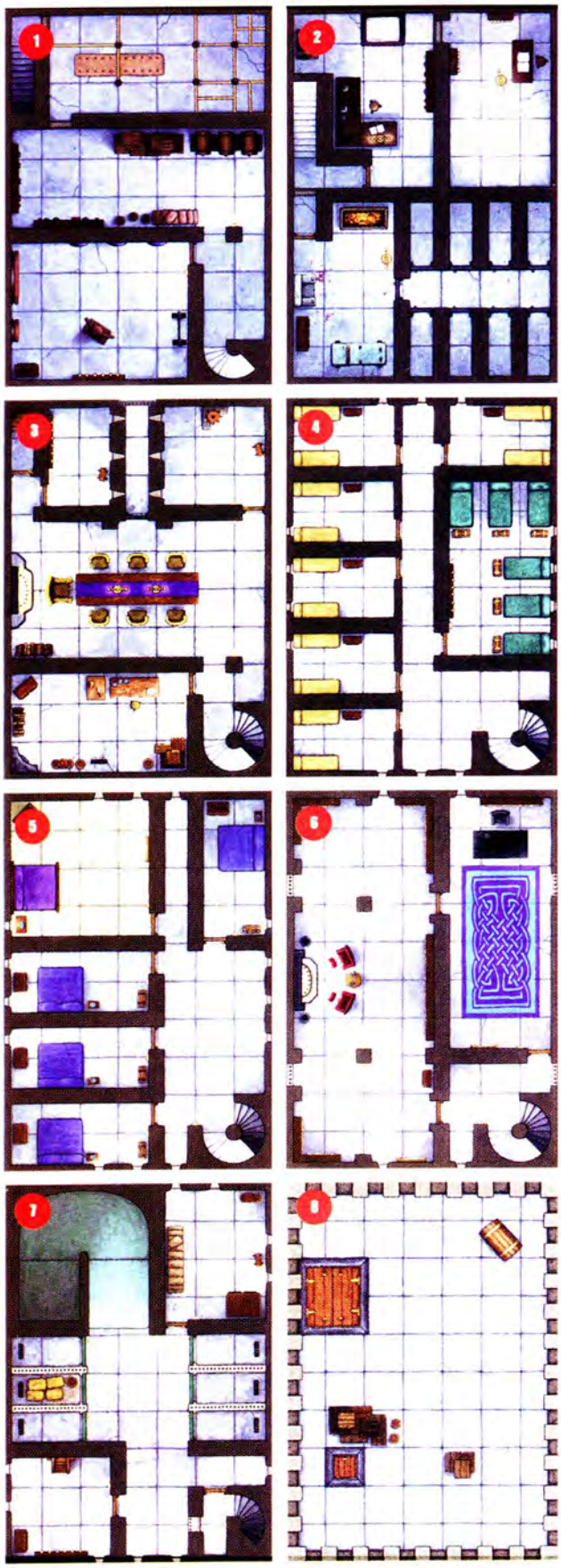
At the Table: Stone Tower



You can use this month's poster map in several ways. The map was concepted as a small stone tower, suitable for mid-level characters to use as a stronghold compatible with the rules in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. Alternatively, the tower levels can represent isolated sections of a dungeon of your own creation. Although passages don't lead out of the tiles, it's easy to explain each tile as an isolated section of a dungeon or larger castle, connected to the main structure by a staircase.

Map 1: Dungeon Level 1

Room	Spaces	Cost
1: Storage Room, Basic	1	250 gp
2: Training Area, Rogue	1	2000 gp
3: Training Area, Combat	1	1,000 gp

Map 2: Dungeon Level 2

Room	Spaces	Cost
4: Magic Lab, Basic	1	500 gp
5: Alchemical Lab, Basic	1	500 gp
6: Guard Post	.5	300 gp
7: Prison Cell	.5	500 gp

Map 3: 1st Floor

Room	Spaces	Cost
8: Guard Posts (2)	1	600 gp
9: Common Area, Fancy	1	3,000 gp
10: Kitchen, Basic	1	2,000 gp

Map 4: 2nd Floor

Room	Spaces	Cost
11: Servants' Quarters (2)	2	1,400 gp
12: Barracks	1	400 gp

Map 5: 3rd Floor

Room	Spaces	Cost
13: Bedrooms, Basic (2)	2	1,400 gp
14: Bedroom Suite, Fancy	1	5,000 gp

Map 6: 4th Floor

Room	Spaces	Cost
15: Library, Basic (2)	2	1,000 gp
16: Study/Office, Fancy	1	2,500 gp

Map 7: 5th Floor

Room	Spaces	Cost
17: Guard Posts (2)	1	600 gp
18: Stable, Fancy	1	3, 000 gp
19: Ramp & Exit	1	0

Other Costs

• Exterior Walls (Superior Masonry, 2 ft.)	31,500 gp
• Interior Walls (Masonry, 2 ft.)	26,250 gp
• Doors, Windows, and Stairs	7,590 gp
• Height Cost Adjustments	11,400 gp
Total Cost	**102,490 gp**

Using the Stone Tower

The costs above reflect certain assumptions about the construction of the castle: all of the wooden doors are simple wooden doors, the secret doors in the dungeon are stone doors with a Search DC of 30 required to locate them, the doors to the prison cells are made of iron, the windows on the 4th floor have iron bars, and all of the other windows are arrow slits.

DMs and players alike can use the tower as is or with any number of modifications. The tower can be altered by adding magical augmentations, by simply removing some of the levels, by changing the order of the levels, or by making any other desired alterations. As is, the tower makes an affordable stronghold for one 12th-level character, two 10th-level characters, or four 9th-level characters, provided that the characters in question all take the Landlord feat.

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DUNGEON Magazine #92
Interlopers of Ruun-Khazai
by David Noonan
An ancient githyanki fortress on the Astral Plane suddenly reappears out of the swirling vortex of energy in which it disappeared so long ago. The opportunity to explore such a potential source of riches can't be passed up, but are the PCs the only ones with an interest in the stronghold? A D&D adventure for four 13th-level PCs. This adventure is in support of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*, which releases in May, 2002.

The Razing of Redshore
by James Jacobs
Something in the deep ocean is terrorizing the coastal fishing and whaling town of Redshore. The PCs, after some investigation, find that the disturbance is more of a handful than they could possibly imagine. A D&D adventure for 20th-level PCs. This module is the gateway to epic-level adventures in your campaign.

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by Frank Brunner
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All I Need to Know I Learned from D&D
LESSON #9:
Sherlock Holmes or Sheer Luck?

Unbelievable, But True

When I created the ruins and the first dungeon level of Castle Greyhawk, it was 1972. The growing number of players and the constant demands for more dungeon adventuring kept me busy long into the nights drawing maps and placing encounters, making each new level a different one to experience.

After the initial levels were completed around the end of the year, I decided to work on several maps at once, so as to be able to carry out more long-term design plans. I was eager to bring into play the "sloping corridor," which could be detected only by careful observation, by a dwarf, or by the use of clay marbles. Some PCs attempted to use water to detect sloping corridors, but cracks in the floor served to make this technique useless. (Why no one, to my knowledge, has ever suggested a plumb line or level to check for an incline is a mystery to me.)

Following my plan, I created long, downward-sloping passages in strategic locations in the lower levels of the dungeon, so that there was a slight chance that an adventurer might get on such a path and find himself all the way at the bottom of the dungeons without realizing what had happened. The best I hoped for, however, was the inadvertent descent of a level or two to bring the adventurer face to face with monsters more powerful than reckoned for. I was in for a surprise.

There came a time late in 1973 when the dauntless Robilar decided to delve into the dungeons alone. As if drawn by a magnet, he went to the location of the first sloping passage and followed it, and the rest, downward. After many hundreds of feet, the wily adventurer suspected that he was indeed moving down. He decided to carry on so as to go as deeply as he could and discover what lay in the dungeon's depths. That he did, and he was promptly rewarded and then sent off to the other side of Oerth.

The next day, Robilar's companion, Terik, searched the city for his friend. He learned that Robilar had adventured alone into the ruined castle, so he decided to seek his companion there. I was astonished by what followed. Somehow Terik managed to follow much the same course Robilar had taken. It took him about six hours, but eventually the worthy fighter also came to the lowest level of the dungeons, and he likewise was transported to the other side of the planet. The very next day, Tenser wished to adventure. He sought his usual cohorts, but soon discovered that both Robilar and Terik were gone, vanished into the dungeons without a trace. Of course Tenser then went into the dungeon to search, and I was flabbergasted when he too managed to take the same route so as to be the third character to attain the last level of the dungeon, all within a few days!

Now I know that none of the players had access to the dungeon maps, for I kept them carefully guarded. The route was of such complexity that no verbal description of what occurred would have served to guide another player in doing the same with his character, and none had used notes or sketched maps to pass along to their fellow adventurers who followed.

So I am left with one conclusion: Some mixture of chance, combined with the familiarity of playing with someone with whom hundreds of hours of time had been spent, and likely a lot of intuition, managed the improbable. The moral of this story is choose your puzzles wisely; if a little detective work and luck is all it takes for your players' characters to work their way through your puzzles, they will. D

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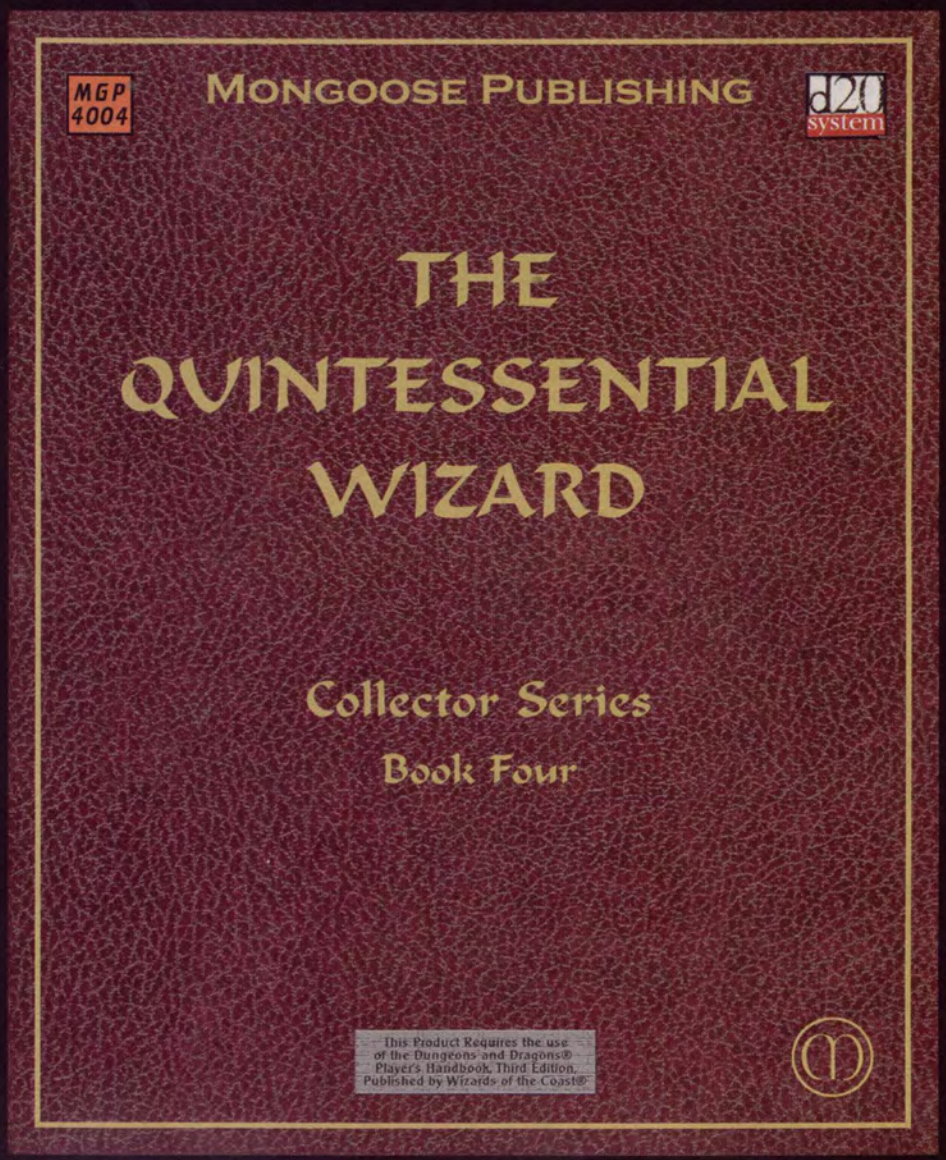
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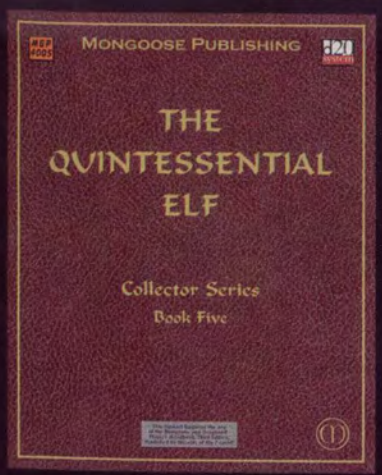

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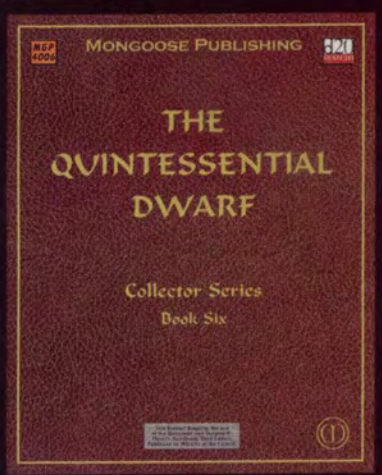

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ZOGONIA

ATTENTION! NEW POLICY! WHEN YOU ARE SCOUTING AHEAD OF THE GROUP AND YOU ENCOUNTER MONSTERS, ONLY CALL BACK THE NAME AND THE NUMBER OF MONSTERS. GOT IT? NAME AND NUMBER, NOTHING ELSE.
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YOU MEAN... IF I STEP INTO A ROOM AND SEE NINE DRAGONS, I SHOULD YELL BACK TO YOU AND KEV...
DRAGONS: NINE
WEIRD. WHAT'S WRONG WITH SAYING "I SEE NINE DRAGONS"?
SAYING "I SEE" WASTES PRECIOUS TIME, DINDIL...
IF YOU DON'T WASTE TIME SAYING "I SEE," THEN THE PARTY CAN REACT TO THE THREAT ONE SECOND SOONER!!!
I'M GOING TO SPEND MY EXTRA SECOND RUNNING AWAY.

by Tony Moseley

Epic Level Countdown

by Mat Smith

Epic Characters

It's a (Whole New) Kind of Magic

Magic has always made the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS world go 'round. It just wouldn't be the same game without *magic missiles* or *rings of invisibility*. Of course, when the *Epic Level Handbook* releases in July, you'll have access to epic spells that completely redefine magic, and epic magic items that could make a *+5 holy avenger* look tarnished.

Epic Spells

"Casting epic spells is nothing less than the direct manipulation of reality itself. Even gods do well to fear mortal casters of epic spells."

Here's another thought that might begin to put into perspective the immense amount of power and flexibility your spellcasters are about to have access to: *Wish* is only a 9th-level spell.

The *Epic Level Handbook* opens a gateway to a level of power that far exceeds anything your spellcasters have ever seen, wielded, or even imagined. When you delve into the realm of epic spellcasting, you leave behind the limits of what can be accomplished with magic.

Epic level spells are developed by piecing together the essential elements of magic (spell seeds) and determining how they work (factors). The twenty-four spell seeds detailed in the *Epic Level Handbook* cover virtually every effect you could want, from dealing damage or gaining protection to having control over life, death, and even time. The "factors" involved in epic spellcasting are the familiar elements of casting time, range, duration, target, area of effect, and so on, but each one is vastly malleable. The combination of all the elements of an epic spell determines how difficult it is to successfully develop (and cast) that spell.

Here's a snippet from one of the fine offerings in the sample spell list:

Hell Ball: A *hell ball* is a burst of crazed energy that detonates with a thundering roar and deals 10d6 acid, 10d6 fire, 10d6 electrical, and 10d6 sonic damage to all creatures within the area. Unattended objects also take this damage. The spell is barely controlled, and you take 10d6 points of damage as you release it (in addition to burning XP).

You point your finger and determine the range (distance and height) at which the *hell ball* is to detonate. A sun-bright, fist-sized globe of strobing energy streaks forth, and unless it impacts upon a material body or solid barrier prior to attaining the indicated range, it blossoms into an effect described by survivors as "hell on earth."

Epic Magic Items

In an epic level campaign, treasure division is only going to get harder. Much like epic spells, epic magic items enter a no-holds-barred arena of functionality.

Take a look at just one of the many mouth-watering epic magic items:

Boots of Swiftness: These soft-soled leather shoes grant their wearer a +6 enhancement bonus to Dexterity. The wearer's speed doubles (this does not stack with any magical or supernatural enhancement to speed), she gains the evasion ability (as the rogue class feature), and her jumping distance is not limited by her height. The wearer gains a +20 competence bonus to Balance, Climb, Jump, and Tumble checks. Three times per day, the wearer can utter a command word to activate the boots' *haste* power (as the *haste* spell, lasts 20 rounds). *Market Price:* 256,000 gp.

Of course, before you start thinking that epic level spells and magic items are going to make your characters all-powerful beings, you'll have to take a look at the epic level monsters. Next month, you'll get a glimpse of a few creatures that will make even a *+12 defending everdancing spiked chain of speed* seem inadequate.

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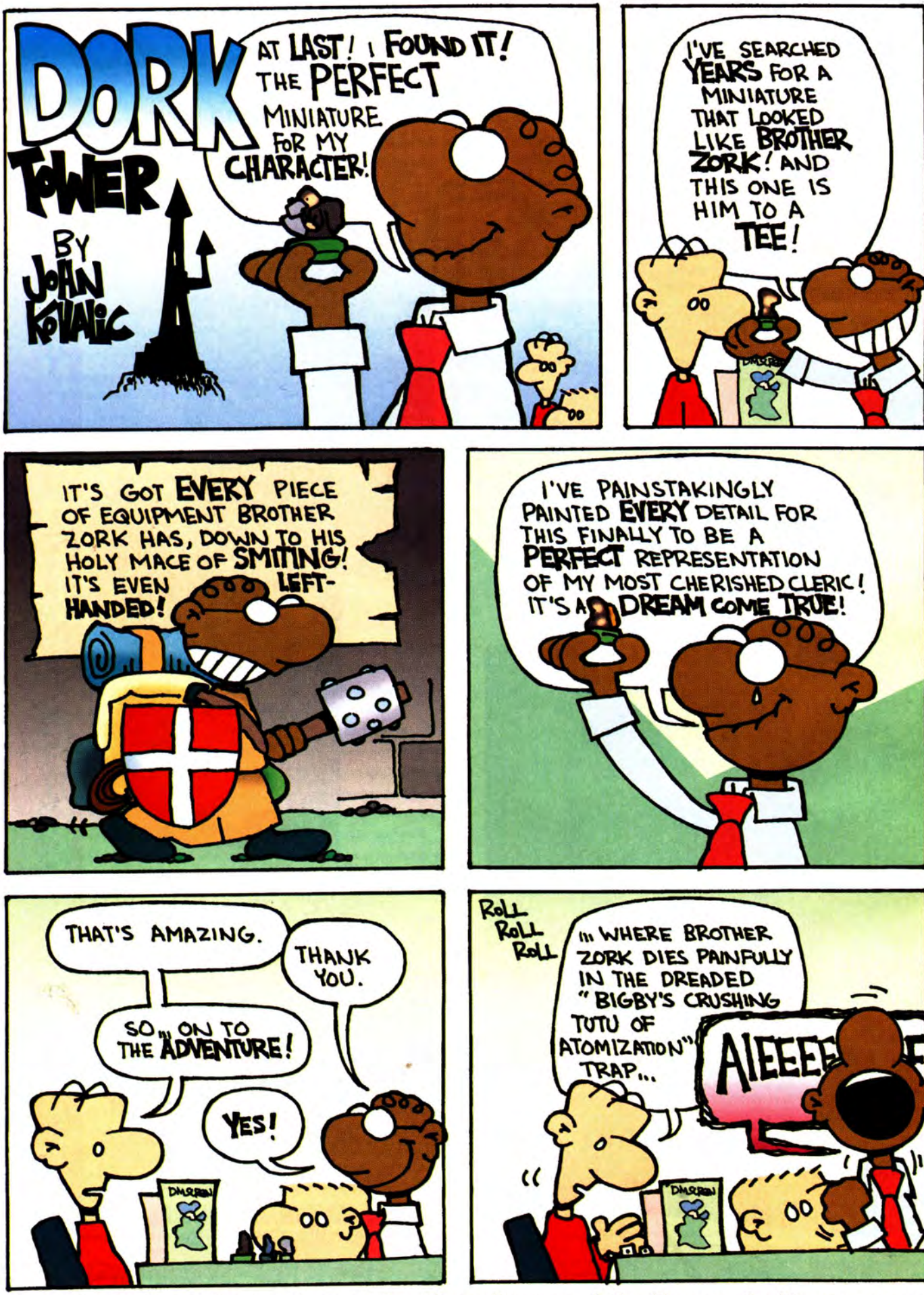
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IT'S GOT EVERY PIECE OF EQUIPMENT BROTHER ZORK HAS, DOWN TO HIS HOLY MACE OF SMITING! IT'S EVEN LEFT-HANDED!
I'VE PAINSTAKINGLY PAINTED EVERY DETAIL FOR THIS FINALLY TO BE A PERFECT REPRESENTATION OF MY MOST CHERISHED CLERIC! IT'S A DREAM COME TRUE!
THAT'S AMAZING.
THANK YOU.
SO... ON TO THE ADVENTURE!
YES!
ROLL ROLL ROLL
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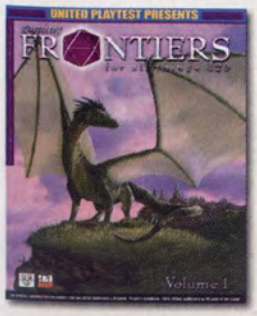

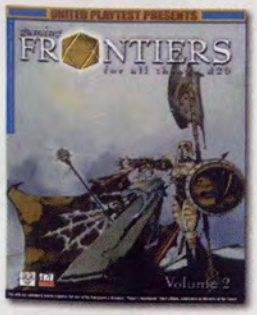

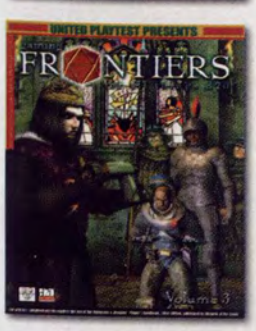

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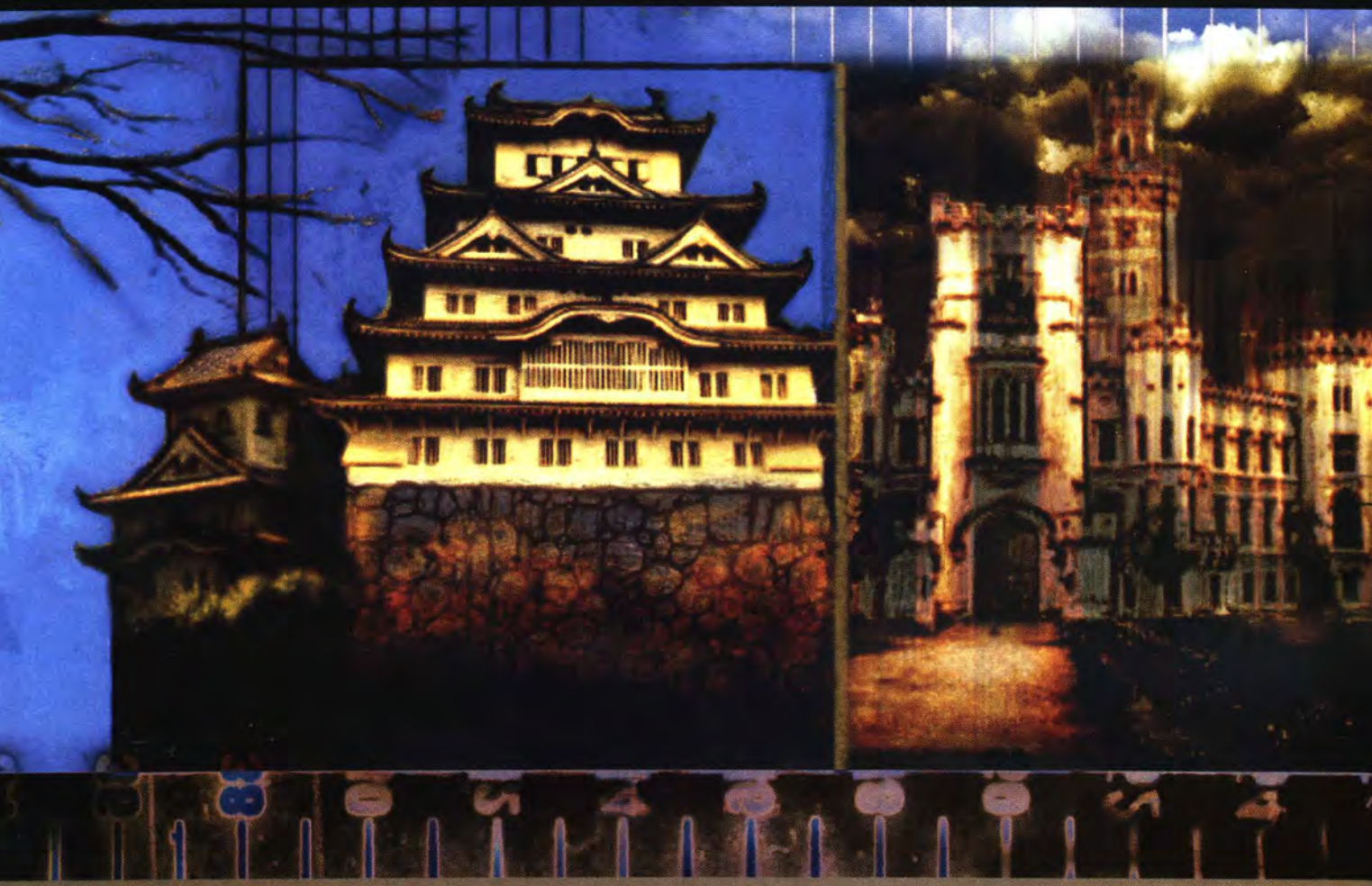


Fit for a King

The History, Evolution, and Construction of Castles

by Dean Poisso • illustrated by Anthony Granato

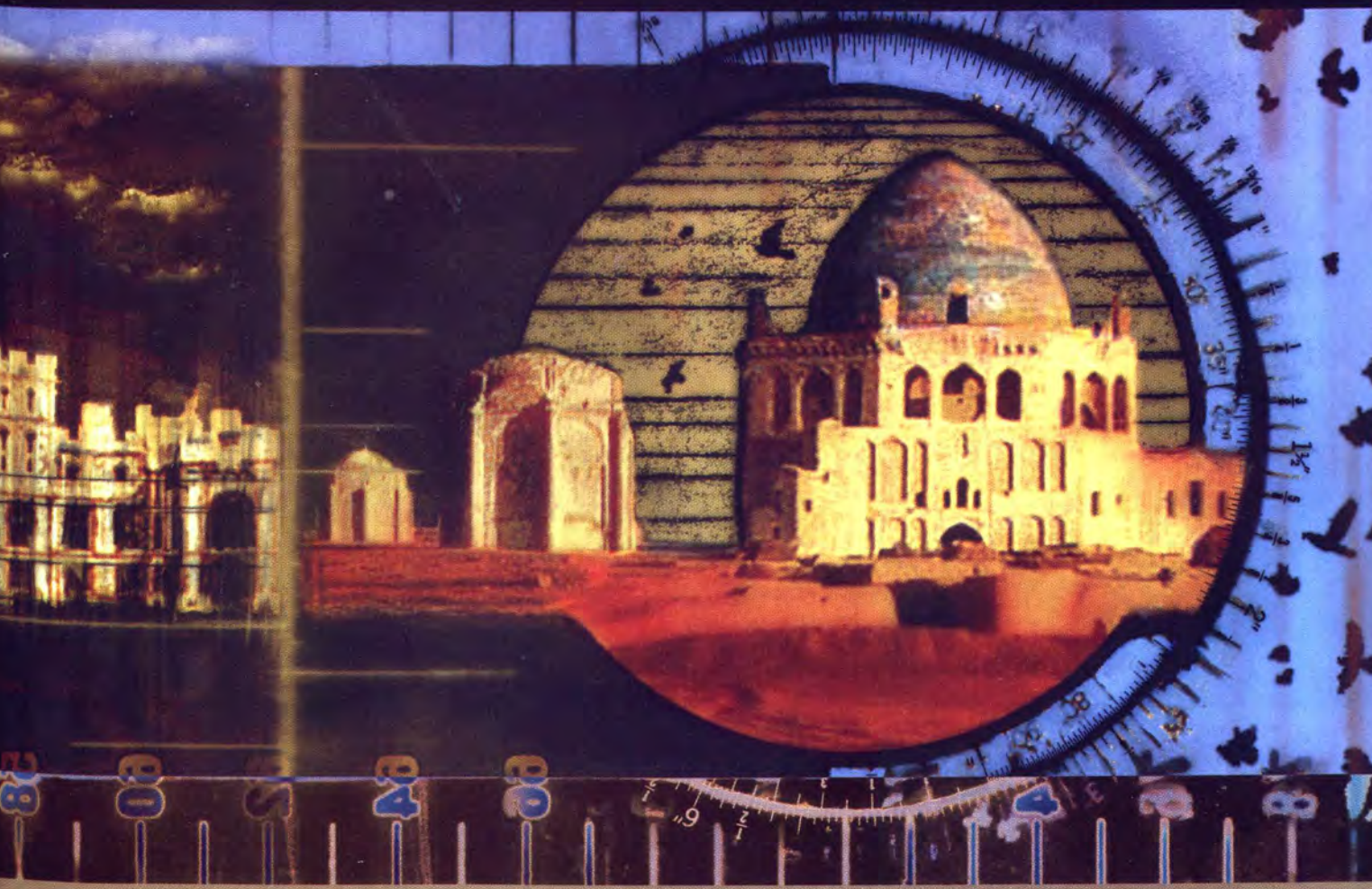
Castles are more than just grandiose scenery. Depending on whether your PCs want to seize a castle or gain a night's rest within its protecting walls, they make the perfect locations for battles and encounters, can provide your characters with important necessities, and can house NPCs who have valuable information. Castles are living communities and incredible works of engineering, requiring specialized knowledge and tactics from any who would breach a castle's defenses.

In Middle Ages Europe, the castle reigned supreme as a symbol of status and power, yet it was the need for protection and control that drove the development of castles. With constant warfare and the threat of barbarian invasions, many of Europe's great cities sprang up around its first castles, which provided protection and safety for nobles and commoners alike. A lord's need to protect his lands and the people who worked them was paramount. Castles provided control points along roads for tolls and taxes and offered places to conduct business in relative safety. Obviously, keeping tight control over his serfs also suited a lord well.

STICKS AND STONES

The first European castles were little more than wooden forts atop hills. These fortifications often served as a home for the lords and their households. By the eleventh century, these hilltop forts had become common in mainland Europe but were just gaining a foothold in Britain.

Many of these forts, called motte-and-bailey castles, were built upon older structures left by the Romans. The Normans, Franks, and those within Germania, for example, had been building advanced motte-and-bailey forts atop existing Roman structures since the early 800s. The Romans were masters at building fortifications similar to a classic motte-and-bailey. A Roman legion could erect a walled rampart and surrounding ditch in a matter of hours. As the legion moved, it created a new fort wherever it halted for camp.



Some of these forts were strategically placed to defend against encroaching barbarians, such as the Saxons and the Vikings. These forts saw frequent combat and so were often reinforced with better materials, eventually leading to permanent fortresses with a full garrison of soldiers.

The classic motte-and-bailey castle consisted of a large, flat-topped hill called a motte (often man-made) with a moat or ditch at the base and a strong wooden palisade (wall) at the point where the hill rose steeply upward. Wooden towers stood along the wall to give lookouts and bowmen a place to stand. Another hill was created at the top of the flat hill using earth from the moat, and atop this was a large wooden fort. The fort had a single entrance with a trestle resembling a pier that ran down from the fort entrance to the bailey yard (the area within the palisade).

While some motte-and-bailey forts were built of stone, most were constructed with wood and earthworks. As time went on, they were required to house more and more people; the lord's retainers, craftspeople, and their families also needed protection from barbarians and the enemies of the lord.

Motte-and-bailey forts began evolving because of the need for still greater protection. The constant incursions of the Saracens and Moors into Norman-held strongholds in southern France forced the Normans to adopt many of the building techniques of their more advanced Iberian invaders. This led to the creation of the Norman keep (or donjon), a rectangular palisade of stone with corner towers and a square stone tower at the center.

These keeps were the prototypes of castles to come. The natural evolution of motte-and-bailey fortifications and Norman keeps would begin in earnest in the late 1000s when the first crusaders began to return home.

Ancient Legacies

During the first crusades, crusaders encountered fortifications that dwarfed everything they'd seen in Europe. The Islamic world had been exposed to great structures like the pyramids of Egypt, the ziggurats of Babylon, great marvels from the Byzantine Empire, and others. Fortresses in the Holy Lands had been built to withstand great wars that raged through the region for millennia.

The Roman legacy also left its ubiquitous mark on the Holy Land. This was the land where Rome had carried out some of the most brutal sieges in history. Just as the crusaders were learning a millenia later, the Roman legions had disco ered that the inhabitants of the Holy Lands were well versed in fortified warcraft. Indeed, many Middle Eastern architects learned the secrets of building strong defensive works from the Romans themselves.

The Fortress of Masada, in what is now modern-day Israel, is a classic example of what the crusaders, when they encountered it well over a thousand years after its construction, would call a castle.

As John Gibson tells us in his *Anatomy of a Castle*, "[Masada] stands on a plateau on top of a high hill that has precipitous sides. The fortress on top was accessible only by a narrow, winding path, and the plateau was surrounded by a massive stone curtain wall, some 12 feet thick and 18 feet high. There were 38 towers, 75 feet

Using Castles

Castles can play several different roles in a campaign, allowing the DM and players a great deal of freedom.

As Background Scenery: The least detailed and easiest way to handle castles and other strongholds, this is the default in many campaigns. The DM places castles as needed, makes ad hoc rulings about castle construction, and creates details about a castle only when necessary. If a player wants to build a stronghold or castle, the DM adjudicates the situation based on campaign concerns rather than a concrete economy.

As Short-term Adventure Locations: The second and most adaptable way to handle castles in a campaign is to let players who are enthusiastic about using the detailed construction rules found in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* to spend time outside the game developing their stronghold. The players will usually need to take the Landlord feat found in the guidebook, but the magical augmentations they'll eventually add to the stronghold should give them interesting and balanced abilities that reward the character for spending the feat.

The second benefit of this option is that it leaves the DM free to occasionally focus on a player's or NPC's stronghold as the location for the adventure. Done right, this allows the players to see the rewards of stronghold ownership and gives the group a heightened interest in the adventure because it's taking place on their home turf. DMs using this option should be cautious however: Occasional risk and damage are part of owning a stronghold, but a player shouldn't feel that damage to the stronghold happens so often that he can't do anything but make repairs.

As a Campaign Focus: The characters often build strongholds themselves or serve a patron based in a well-detailed and important structure. The detailed rules from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* have been used to create and balance the structures that the players control. Many groups find this style of play rewarding once the adventurers reach higher levels, and it is easy for groups that have used less-detailed methods of using strongholds to adopt once the players develop an interest in running a castle of their own. DMs interested in adopting this style can easily steer the group into positions in a larger castle, have a powerful noble award the players a stronghold for some service, or provide players with other incentives to build a stronghold.

high, spaced along the wall, and a strong keep commanded the approach path. Another tower was built lower down the path to act as an outpost—the forerunner of the barbican. The stone keep was rectangular in shape and had a tower at each corner some 90 feet high. Huge cisterns to hold rainwater were cut into the rock, and vast stores of provisions were laid down."

Not every fortress held by the Muslims during the crusades was of this caliber, but basic fortification styles were uniform and designed to allow the fortress to be held with as few defenders as possible.

Roman design techniques and siege tactics—the best in the world—had been taken into consideration during the construction of many fortresses in the Holy Lands. Stone palisades included towers at each corner and at regular intervals, as well as forward towers to protect entrances. These became precursors to the barbican. Buttresses were also developed to counter tunneling invaders.

Middle East Meets West

Ultimately, it was the collision of Middle Eastern and Western cultures that defined the evolution of the castle. The crusaders were faced with the daunting prospect of besieging fortresses built by Romans and Byzantines that had stood the test of time in war after war. After numerous bloody, devastating sieges, the crusaders adapted to these new designs. By the same token, the defending Muslims also adapted to the tactics of the invading Europeans.

This constant reworking of formerly tried-and-true battle formulae was the force behind the evolution of the castle. Crusaders who built their castles within the Levant (the Holy Lands) replaced the rubble masonry of Byzantine-style forts with solid blocks of stone. They designed their towers with rounded walls like those of Turkish citadels, since rounded walls create no blind spots and siege weapons do significantly less damage to them. Some crusaders built curved stone curtain walls with more towers than before, which made for a stronger structure since there were no corners (the weakest point on a rectangle) to assault.

In the end, the castles of the Levant became the precursors of the greatest castles and fortresses in Europe.

Bringing It Home

Edward I, also known as Edward the Longshanks, knew from his tenure in the Levant that castles keep a territory secure. Edward's reign, which began in 1272 upon his return from the Crusades, marked the pinnacle of European castle building.

Edward the Longshank's first order of business as king was to crush the kingdoms of Wales that had defied English control and proclaimed their independence. With his newly gained methods of castle construction and siege combat, Edward I began building a series of castles that enabled him to dominate the Welsh countryside.

He implemented new concepts that redefined castle construction. Concentric walls like those he had seen in the Holy Lands, with a lower front wall and a raised secondary wall, allowed double the firepower, with archers on the second wall covering those on the first. Some donjon (keep) walls were upwards of 23 feet thick and rounded, capable of repelling the mightiest siege engines. Entire rivers were diverted to act as moats, some so deep that Edward could resupply his castle by sailing a ship up to the castle for unloading! Crenellated walls and rounded towers were positioned to provide extra cover and support for guards manning the walls. Massive barbicans and multiple fortified gates guarded the drawbridges, all covered by bowfire from the walls. In some castles, multiple gates allowed troops to disperse rapidly against enemy forces outside.

Of all the innovations encompassed in these Welsh castles, one weapon became a key focal point around which the castles were designed, a deadly weapon whose strategies Edward brought back from the crusades: the trebuchet. The trebuchet was a Chinese invention, modified by Arab traders and eventually adopted by the crusaders. It was capable of launching a 250-pound stone more than 200 yards and reducing walls more than 5 feet thick into rubble. It was accurate, and it was devastating.

Edward the Longshanks built his castles to withstand such barrages, and as a

result, many experts agree that his castles are among the finest ever produced. In fact, Edward I was perfecting what was already happening all across Europe. Many other nobles, bishops, and wealthy knights were building massive fortifications based on designs still fresh in their memories after savage battles in the Levant. Although wars still abounded, the castles and towns that sprang up around them served to stabilize feudal society. The best engineers and master builders were sought after from all quarters of Europe. Castles allowed for great gains in wealth and power for both those who ruled and for those who lived in their shadow.

The same intermittent warfare that created the great need for the castle eventually spelled its decline over the next two and a half centuries, as weaponry began to outstrip the defenses castles once offered against stone, arrow, and blade. By the mid-1400s, the advent of the cannon outdated these once mighty symbols of power and greatness.

FORTRESSES OF THE EAST

The development of the castle in Chinese culture was vastly different than in Europe. By 5000 BC, the Chinese were known to have built huge forts that stretched more than a mile in all directions. Chinese and Korean fortresses and castles, which had stood for centuries, were far more sophisticated than those being erected in Europe but not quite as developed as those in the Middle East. The typical Asian castle was rectangular, built upon earthen piles shored up by wood and stone blocks. China (and to a lesser extent, Korea) experienced long periods of relative peace, requiring little in the way of innovation. As a result, improvement came slowly. When war eventually did come, so too did new inventions for waging battle and defending against it.

Humble Beginnings

The castles of Japan show remarkable similarities in evolution to those in Europe. Rude forts, not dissimilar to the motte-and-bailey structures of Europe, dotted the countryside as early as 300 BC. These forts could hardly be called castles, yet they exhibited many of the elements that would one day define both Japanese and European castles.

Early Japanese forts had wooden palisades and a central tower but nothing that could be considered a keep. Made entirely of wood, they protected the rice farming that had been newly imported from the Chinese mainland. These forts were often abandoned, and it is estimated that at one point there were more than 40,000 such structures scattered across the country!

Despite the existence of an emperor, clans eventually began to dominate Japanese society. During the fourth century, the Yamato clan conquered part of southern Korea, causing immigration between Korea and Japan to become commonplace, at least for a time. By the mid-600s, the Chinese finally repelled the Japanese out of Korea. Among these exiled Korean emigrants were allies of the Yamato clan. These emigrants were master castle builders who had worked for the Chinese. They freely shared their knowledge with their Yamato allies.

The Japanese stood on the brink of a new age of almost constant warfare. Their fortresses began to match the design of Chinese and Korean castles, and ongoing fighting would push the design boundaries even farther.

Samurai Influence

At the start of Japan's Middle Age (794-1195 AD), a new system of taxes began to force many farmers to sell their land to more powerful landowners. Most of these farmers became tenants, and the landowners grew vastly wealthy. The landowners hired samurai to protect their holdings, launching the golden era of the samurai caste.

The samurai soon became the ruling power. Internecine fighting between samurai prompted many to build mountaintop castles called yamajiro. These mountain castles were really no better than the old forts from the Yamato era but were tactically better placed. Easily defensible, they were hardly worth living in and were used only during times of war. The yamajiro set the stage for much-needed defensive improvements, allowing the outdated Japanese defenses to withstand the Mongol invasions and the enormously violent civil war that was soon to come.

By the Sengoku Period (the Warring States Era, 1478-1605 AD), there were hundreds of mountain castles in Japan. The samurai now found it necessary not only to defend themselves and launch offensives from their mountaintop castles but to live and do business there as well. The Japanese castle developed from the yamajiro mountaintop design, becoming the great hirayamajiro.

After the construction of Azuchi Castle by the great general Oda Nobunaga, Japanese castle design would never be the same. The hirayamajiro utilized multiple moats and concentric walls of stone. Azuchi Castle also had three baileys with a donjon (keep) sitting hundreds of feet above on top of a huge hill. The maze-like array of moats and palisades caused attackers to expose at least one flank at any given time, allowing archers and riflemen a relatively clear shot. The taking of a Japanese castle became a supreme effort of skill, perseverance, and tenacity.

Motte-and-Bailey

Motte-and-bailey construction typifies the border fort that frontier villages rely on for protection, even in powerful kingdoms. Smaller or less-sophisticated domains might regard motte-and-bailey construction as the safest dwellings they can build.

The Basics: When using a motte-and-bailey castle in your campaign, apply these statistics to a typical 6-inch-thick, 10-ft.-by-10-ft. wooden wall section.

HP: 60; Hardness: 5; Break DC 20; Climb DC: 21.

Stronghold Builder's Statistics: The typical motte-and-bailey fort includes a wooden palisade, a wooden tower that houses the lord and retainers, and separate buildings enclosed by the palisade. Here's a cost breakdown of a standard motte-and-bailey fort:

Wooden Palisade: A 10-foot-high, 6-inch-thick, 600-foot-long oval palisade encloses an area with a diameter of 200 feet.

HP: 60; Hardness: 5; Break DC: 20; Climb DC: 21; Cost: 6,000 gp.

Wooden Tower: This sturdy building houses about 30 people. Use the basic residential cluster from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and add the cost of wooden walls. Total cost: 21,600 gp. Other statistics as the wooden palisade above.

Outbuildings: Place as needed. See the "Clusters" section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* for ideas.

During the next century of all-out warfare, the Japanese castle reigned supreme, withstanding even the onslaught of firearms that had brought down the great castles of Europe. Eventually, the shogun Ieyasu Tokugawa decreed a law allowing only one castle per family, with all the others to be destroyed. This decree, as well as the relative peace of the new Tokugawa Shogunate, marked the beginning of the decline of the great castles of Japan.

CASTLES FOR YOUR CAMPAIGN

Motte-and-Bailey

The motte-and-bailey fort was constructed by digging a large ditch in a broad oval anywhere from 100 to 300 feet in diameter. The earth that was removed from the ditch was piled into a large, flat-topped mound that rose anywhere from 10 to more than 100 feet. A wooden palisade (a fortified fence) was erected around the ditch, with a wooden drawbridge providing entry into the inner bailey yard. The ditch was often filled with water in order to slow the advance of attackers. Wooden towers along the palisade and a gatehouse to guard the drawbridge added further defensive capabilities.

Within the bailey, the mound (or "motte") was covered with clay to stabilize the hill so it would not shift after heavy rains. Atop the motte was a wooden tower, which also had its own palisade. This tower provided living space for the fort's commander, troops, and even their families. Sometimes another lower but larger earthwork was raised inside the bailey, also covered with clay. Upon this flat-topped mound were the other structures necessary to fortress life: workshops, stables, kitchens, housing for troops, and so on.

The greatest weakness of the motte-and-bailey fort was its wooden construction. Wet animal hides were sometimes strung along the palisades to keep them from being torched by attackers. Regardless of this danger, motte-and-bailey forts remained popular because they were cheap and easy to build. A motte-and-bailey fort could be fully erected in as little as eight days, while the Roman legions were capable of erecting a primitive version in hours.

Towers: Towers in motte-and-bailey castles are typically wooden. A wooden palisade tower has a Hardness of 5 and 60 hit points per each 10-foot-by-10-foot section. Creatures on top of a tower have one-half cover and gain a +4 bonus to AC. Firing from behind an arrow slit inside the tower gives creatures nine-tenths cover and a +10 bonus to AC.

Drawbridges: Drawbridges are made of 6-inch-thick wood and simply laid over the ditch or moat as needed. They have a Hardness of 5 and 60 hit points per each 10-foot-by-10-foot section. If the moat is large, there is a rope-and-pulley system to raise the bridge or a pivoting mechanism that allows the bridge to turn on its center.

The Keep: The keep, or donjon as it is usually called, represented the first step in the evolution of a motte-and-bailey castle. Keeps were made of square stone blocks, were easy to erect, and were relatively cheap. With a solid work crew, it took only a few short months to erect a stone keep, commonly called a shell keep.

Shell keeps were hollow because the man-made mottes could not support the weight of a full-blown stone tower. The donjon was typically 20 to 30 feet high, with a 10- to 15-foot-high stone curtain wall encircling it upon the motte. Surrounding it in the lower bailey were the stables, smithy, storehouses, and other domestic structures.

Gatehouses were also improved by replacing their wooden towers with stone ones, eliminating the fire hazard.

The popularity of shell keeps grew steadily. With improvements to building techniques, these keeps proved a decent residence for a commander and his family. The top floors of these keeps became primarily living areas, with tiny windows to prevent outsiders from climbing through them. Advancing masonry and engineering techniques allowed the construction of keeps up to 90 feet tall with walls more than 10 feet thick.

The Classic Castle

There is no such thing as a "typical" castle, because its surroundings and terrain dictate a castle's its design. Cliffs, large hills, and any point that could overlook a region and provide great difficulty to attackers were desirable. Some castles were built on flat plains and surrounded by artificial lakes. Some had rivers diverted around them to provide a deep moat, and some were erected with a stone wall sandwiched between two wooden palisades. The greatest castles, however, were built of hewn stone. The availability of materials was a determining factor. Some castles required quarried stone far from the construction site. Iron and other metals were needed for tools and accoutrements. Wood from nearby forests was needed in huge quantities for framing and for the manufacture of tools. Water supplies were important, as was arable land to supplement the upkeep of the castle. All of these considerations were equally important in the planning and construction of a castle.

Although castles differed in design and features, they did share certain universal aspects. The walls of a European castle were usually at least 30 feet tall and averaged 7 feet thick. For example, the great castle of Beaumaris erected by Edward the Longshanks had a curtain wall 35 feet tall, 10 feet thick, and 1,200 feet long.

The Stone Keep

One of the first advancements in motte-and-bailey construction, the stone keep offers greater protection and walls strong enough to stop more powerful monsters.

The Basics: When using a keep in your campaign, apply the statistics below to a typical 1-foot-thick, 10-ft.-by-10-ft. masonry section of a keep.

HP: 90; Hardness: 8; DC to Break: 35; Climb DC: 15.

Stronghold Builder's Statistics: The stone keep consists of two parts, the curtain wall and a stone tower. It can easily be inserted into the middle of a larger motte-and-bailey fortress by using it in place of the wooden tower.

Stone Curtain Wall: A 10-foot-high, 2-foot-thick, 200-foot-long masonry wall encloses an area with a roughly 65-foot diameter.

HP: 90; Hardness: 8; Break DC: 35; Climb DC: 15; Cost: 5,000 gp.

Stone Tower: This sturdy building houses about 30 people. Use the basic residential cluster from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and add the cost of masonry walls. Total cost: 43,600 gp. Other statistics are as the curtain wall above.

The amount of stone it takes to build a wall such as this is immense. To properly construct such a wall, workers had to dig through the ground until they reached solid bedrock. The bedrock was leveled and the foundation was then laid. If no bedrock was found, earth was removed to a depth equal to twice the width of the curtain wall. The resulting ditch was filled with broken rock, which was then flattened. Laborers erected intricate scaffolding systems to provide access to the heights of the curtain, which were eventually topped with the ramparts and crenellations common to all castles. Once this was finished, the walls were coated in a plaster soup that hardened to make the wall waterproof and protect the mortar between the stones.

The gatehouse was another important castle structure. Gatehouses originated from the old wooden gate towers of motte-and-bailey castles. Crusaders who had seen fortresses in the Levant immediately realized the defensive power of these structures. After the crusades, most European castles were constructed with enormous gatehouses to protect the entrance, the weakest part of a castle.

Around this same time, castles began to be constructed with barbicans. The barbican was a set of double towers connected by a stone breastwork that covered the area where the drawbridge met the gate. Once inside the barbican, attackers found themselves in a small gallery facing a reinforced iron portcullis (behind which was another iron portcullis), with archers firing arrows from loopholes at their flanks and soldiers above them firing arrows and dropping scalding oil, water, or rocks from the murderholes (machiolations). With the development of the barbican, the entrance suddenly became one of the most difficult features of a castle to assault.

Moats also provided a number of defensive benefits. The moat of a castle was dug down to the bedrock. It was often filled with sharp pungee stakes, which were sharpened pieces of wood that stuck up below the surface of the water. Moats were feared by armored attackers, because falling into a moat in full armor usually equated to death by drowning. Most attackers chose instead to assault the deadly barbican and gatehouse, both of which were fiercely protected.

Drawbridge technology also advanced. Now under the cover of protection from within the gatehouse, the drawbridge could be pulled upward by strong chains to create the first barrier to invaders. Attackers eventually began bringing in their own bridges for crossing moats and ditches, but some moats were simply too large for this tactic.

All in all, the construction of a castle was a monumental undertaking requiring thousands of laborers, cutters, bricklayers, carpenters, and smiths as well as hundreds of masons and engineers. Most castles took at least 3 to 10 years to construct. As long as a decade after its main works were finished, a castle might still be under construction for modifications to make it still more defensible.

A complete castle includes 10 towers, 2 gatehouses, a moat, a keep, an armory, a smithy, stables, kitchens, barracks, multiple wells, a carpenter's shop, and storehouses.

Towers: Towers from classic castles are rounded and made of stone. They have a Hardness of 8 and each 10-foot-by-10-foot section has 540 hit points.

Barbican/Gatehouse: Barbicans are constructed in a manner similar to towers. They have a Hardness of 8 and 540 hit points.

Moat: Moats can be anywhere from 7 to 20 feet deep and average some 30 feet wide. A moat's banks are always steep, except for areas used for fishing, which are usually far away from the main castle. Relatively shallow moats (10 feet or less) can be lined with spikes and spears. For more information on moats, such as spike damage, prices, and enhancements, see "Mortar and Stone" in this issue.

The Yamajiro

The original Japanese mountain forts were similar in design to the motte-and-bailey forts of ancient Europe except that the towers were not lived in. Instead they were used merely as defense and lookout platforms.

The yamajiro castles of later eras were little more than the forts of the Yamato era placed high atop a mountain in order to force would-be attackers to attack from a specific quarter. These castles were made mostly of wood and were often used as hideouts during the intermittent fighting that occurred between samurai.

The Classic Castle

The classic castle is a defensible stone structure that can house a small army.

The Basics: The following statistics are for a European-style castle built at the height of the castle's era. Assume that the walls are all 7-ft.-thick superior masonry.

HP: 630; Hardness: 8; Break DC: 107; Climb DC: 20.

Stronghold Builder's Statistics: Large classic castles cost enough to be out of reach to all but the highest-level characters, and the DM should see that only the most powerful nobles can afford to maintain these expensive buildings. The "Cheap Keep" example structure in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* provides an excellent example of a small castle within a player's reach. For examples of larger structures, including magical augmentations see "Every Home a Castle" in this issue.

The Hirayamajiro

The castles built during the classic era of Japan were not merely strongholds but also symbols of power. The daimyo (lords) created castles as much to show one another up as to protect themselves. Only the most powerful samurai lords had the resources to build and maintain such magnificent structures.

Japanese hirayamajiro castles, like their European counterparts, were individually designed based on certain universal features. Location was the foundation of the hirayamajiro's design. All Japanese castles were built on a defensible location. The defenses of the castle were mapped out before construction ever started. During this planning phase, the master builder roped off the entire castle to see where the walls would be erected and how the defenses would be arranged. Once the defensive survey was complete, a swarm of laborers, carpenters, and stonecutters descended upon the site under the commission of a government agent and master designer.

The moat of a Japanese castle could be up to 30 feet deep and was extremely wide. This forced attackers into narrow areas and revealed hard-

The Yamajiro

A wooden fort built high in the mountains, a yamajiro is spartan and defensible rather than practical.

The Basics: The Yamajiro is similar to the motte-and-bailey forts described earlier in the article.

HP: 60; Hardness: 5; Break DC: 20; Climb DC: 21.

Stronghold Builder's Statistics: Since the Yamajiro is not meant for habitation, it is cheaper than a typical motte-and-bailey fort. Note that the prices listed below do not take environmental modifiers into account; the typical yamajiro was built high in the mountains, and DMs should adjust the price based on the guidelines found in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.*

Wooden Palisade: A 10-foot-high, 6-inch-thick, 600-foot-long oval palisade, encloses an area with a diameter of 200 feet.

HP: 60; Hardness: 5; Break DC: 20; DC to Climb Palisade Wall: 21; Cost: 6,000 gp.

Wooden Tower: Use the basic residential cluster from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and add the cost of wooden walls, but replace the eight basic bedrooms with eight barracks. Total cost: 19,200 gp. Other statistics are as the wooden palisade above.

Outbuildings: as needed, but since the yamajiro isn't intended for habitation it contains few or no outbuildings. See the "Clusters" section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* for ideas.

The Hirayamajiro

Massive beyond the scope of all but the highest-level characters and most powerful rulers, a hirayamajiro will likely see use only as a location to explore or invade and not as a campaign focus.

The Basics: The following statistics are for the exterior walls of a hirayamajiro. The walls are 7-ft.-thick superior masonry.

HP: 630; Hardness: 8; Break DC: 107; Climb DC: 20.

Stronghold Builder's Statistics: Detailing a hirayamajiro is beyond the scope of this article. However, the Citadel of the Planes example in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* shows how massive (and magical) a fortification can be.

to-defend quarters, allowing soldiers on the castle walls and towers to inflict maximum damage on anyone trying to storm the castle.

Outside walls were constructed with massive loads of hand-hewn rock. No mortar was necessary, since each stone was tightly fitted together. Castle walls were always curved, using a technique that fitted the stones together at an angle around the large earthen mound that the keep, or tenshu, would be built on. This gentle curve made the walls remarkably strong and able to withstand the earthquakes so common in Japan.

At the height of the hirayamajiro castle, firearms were just making their way into use in Japan. As a result, the castle walls began to be designed with musket loopholes. In fact, the whole design process was based around the need for protection against gunfire.

The Japanese tenshu was designed to confuse attacking armies. The winding moat presented the first obstacle. Attackers had to negotiate the moat while under massive fire from the defenders on the walls and in the gunloops. Next were the gates, heavily guarded and so narrow that only a few people at a time could pass through. Once past the gate, attackers found themselves boxed inside a courtyard, with two other gates at right angles to the main gate. These gates were heavily manned with archers and riflemen. Past these secondary gates, attackers found yet another long, twisting moat, more courtyards, and more gates. As many as three or four moats might separate a tenshu from the main gate.

The tenshu stood a hundred feet beyond this network of defenses. The framework for the tenshu and outlying buildings were created by the master carpenter at his shop. The disassembled framework was delivered to the site, where it was reassembled. In the center of the tenshu was a massive wooden pillar rising up through each floor of the keep, providing stability to the entire structure.

The interior walls of the hirayamajiro were moveable, usually constructed of wood and paper. This made it susceptible to fire and was a glaring weakness. However, wood fixtures and frameworks were usually coated with either a fireproof lacquer or plaster retardant to protect against fire. Strong stone walls with reinforced doors existed only where great security was needed, such as a household well. Some castles had as many as ten wells, many of which were hidden to circumvent poisoning attempts.

The basic features of the hirayamajiro are the same as European castles with a few important differences.

Gates: The gates of a Japanese castle are strong and narrow, allowing only four fully armored men to enter through the gate at the same time.

Windows: The wooden-shuttered windows of a hirayamajiro are outlined with spiked trestles to discourage spies and assassins. Attempting to enter a hirayamajiro through a window requires a Climb check (DC 15). Failure by 5 or more means that the character loses her footing and falls onto 1d4 of the spikes. The spikes have a +3 attack bonus and deal 1d4 points of damage.

CASTLE DENIZENS

Castles should be treated much like small towns. Those who live within a castle's walls generally make an attempt to produce some of their own needs, which helps offset the cost of the large staff needed to upkeep and defend a castle.

Aside from the lord of the castle and his family, you'll find four types of people living there: castle staff, craft folk, soldiers, and tenants.

Residents and staff

Lord/Lady: The responsibility of the ruling noble is to make sure the castle provides protection to those living within the region. The Lord imposes taxes of his own choosing and tries to ensure that everything runs according to his wishes and the wishes of his superiors. He acts as judge in the case of disputes and hands out decisions against criminals.

Butler: The butler's job is to make sure the buttery (a wine storage room near the kitchen) is always fully stocked with vintages that please the lord of the castle.

Chamberlain: The chamberlain is in charge of the great hall and all the pages.

Chaplain: The chaplain oversees the spiritual needs of the castle residents. He also serves as scribe and record keeper and keeps track of the punishments meted out by the lord.

Cook: The cook ensures that everyone in the castle is fed. Of course, the best fare is reserved for the lord and his immediate staff.

Doctor: The doctor is responsible for healing the sick and delivering difficult births. Not all castles have a doctor.

Gong Farmer: The gong farmer cleans the indoor latrines (garderobes). If the shaft that carries waste down through the outer castle wall becomes clogged, the gong farmer must climb down into the shaft to clean it.

Pages: Pages are general serving boys.

Spinsters/Embroiderers: Spinsters and embroiderers serve the lady of the castle and ensure that everyone in the castle has appropriate clothing.

Steward/Seneschal: The steward or seneschal is in charge of the castle when the lord and lady are away. A good steward is literate, has a good head for numbers, and is capable of superb attention to detail. He dictates to the castle treasurer how much to pay out for wages and expenses, and he organizes the farming schedule.

Treasurer: The treasurer ensures that payments and expenditures are taken care of in a timely manner.

Craft Folk

Blacksmith: The blacksmith creates tools and accoutrements needed by other craft folk in the castle, repairs weapons and armor (usually with a specialized armorer among the blacksmiths) and runs the smithy.

Cobbler: The cobbler creates and repairs footwear for castle residents and staff.

Dyer: The dyer makes dyes for the fabric and clothing produced by the spinsters and embroiderers.

Master Carpenter: The master carpenter is responsible for the all woodwork done in and around the castle. All the major repairs done by the master mason usually involve the carpenters as well.

Master Mason: The master mason is responsible for all stonework and engineering done to the castle. He usually has a handful of laborers and rough masons working for him.

Potter: The potter makes pottery both for castle use and export.

Tanner: The tanner produces leather from animal hides.

Soldiers

Archers: Archers usually wear padded armor and use a longbow, with a shortsword as their melee weapon. They are an important part of any castle's army, often spelling the difference between victory or defeat.

Foot Soldiers: Foot soldiers typically wear quilted or leather armor and carry a spear, shield, and sometimes a sword, axe, or mace as weapons.

Knights: These men are high-ranking soldiers, often nobles, who serve the Lord. Knights who do not own their own land often serve as commanders within the castle.

Mounted Troops: Mounted troops are second in rank to the knights. They typically possesses strong battle prowess and ride well in combat.

Tenants

Farmers: Farmers work the Lord's fields in return for living on his land.

Fishermen: If the castle is not near a sea or lake, the moat serves as a secondary source of food. Fishermen create a sluice system to farm eels, pike, and other fish. D

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EVERY HOME A

CASTLE

New Rooms and Castle Layouts

by Darrin Drader •Illustration by Kev Walker •Cartography by Christopher West

Strongholds commonly reflect the personalities of their creators. Whether noble knights or traitorous courtier's, people build their abodes to suit their individual needs and objectives. In addition to offering protection from everything from foul weather to marauding monsters, strongholds can be built to provide a forum for information gathering, to conceal their inhabitant's activities, or to facilitate trade.

Protective strongholds tend to be large walled structures that restrict access in and out of the premises. Soldiers, guards, hired workers, and nobility conduct their business, wary of the next political crisis that might call them to arms. Within the walls of the keep, hulking siege engines wait to lay waste to hordes of enemies at a time. Determined guards stand their quiet vigil at the gates, and the soldiers prepare for their inevitable day in battle.

A stronghold established for the purpose of gathering information can accomplish its objectives in a variety of ways. Secret tunnels built throughout the complex might house stealthy eavesdroppers, or scrying devices can be built into the walls of the stronghold, allowing the masters of these structures to learn vital secrets about their guests. This can provide the owners of the stronghold with the kind of leverage necessary to blackmail people into paying them money or backing their plans politically. The strongholds can be built near hostile borders or disputed territory, serving as a nexus of information for those who need to stay on top of local occurrences, providing a home base for scouts.

Most secret organizations create strongholds as meeting places and safe areas where they keep their troops, treasures, and secrets. These might be hidden far away from civilization, or they might be concealed in the heart of the city, where none of the inhabitants suspect that the owner has a hidden agenda. These safe houses provide havens for criminals and valuable rendezvous points for allies who wish to meet or serve the organization.

Although not typically thought of as such, a character's home is also considered a stronghold. The average low-level character has neither the money nor the inclination to keep a true castle, although she might have a small inheritance or loot from an adventure with which to establish a home base. In this case, the character might set up her home to be both defensible and comfortable, usually hiding one or two nasty surprises inside in case trouble finds her at home.

This article details four distinctly different strongholds, each built by characters of a range of levels and classes for completely different purposes. Each structure presents new room types or room clusters that can be used straight out of the magazine or in conjunction with the rules presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. These areas are easily adapted as background areas for an ongoing game or as settings for full dungeon crawls. If the Dungeon Master wishes to include the strongholds and their owners as presented in this article, it is easiest to use the pregenerated characters of the various classes and levels from chapter 2 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

New Stronghold Areas

The following section describes new areas compatible with the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. If you do not have the guidebook, you can still include these areas in castles and dungeons. Simply ignore the Size, Cost, and Prerequisites entries and include the rooms as you would any other location in the campaign.

Classroom

Size: 2 stronghold spaces
Cost: 2,000 gp
Prerequisites: Teacher (Knowledge skill 10+ ranks)
These are large rooms filled with chairs, desks, and books where a teacher can convey knowledge to a number of learners. A range of topics from military tactics to simple arithmetic can be taught here.

Concealed Passages

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 2,000 gp
Prerequisites: None
These areas are not rooms in the traditional sense, but instead constitute 4000 cubic feet worth of concealed hallways (that's passages 5 feet wide, 10 feet tall, and 80 feet long), the entrances of which are hidden by secret doors (search DC 25). The hallways are usually carpeted, and curtains are often draped along the walls to absorb sound. Small openings are created, allowing the person using the passages to see and hear into adjoining rooms. These openings are commonly concealed by paintings, translucent drapery, or illusions. This room can be purchased as many times as needed to accommodate the needs of the owner of the stronghold. You must pay the normal cost for secret doors in addition to the cost of this room.

Crypt

Size: 2 stronghold spaces
Cost: 1,000 gp
Prerequisites: None
Crypts are an indoor area where the dead are interred. The dead can be placed in alcoves that run along the walls or entombed in sarcophagi, depending on what type of burial chambers are available. Crypts offer one type of resting place or another,

For Your Campaign.

This article makes use of the costs and rules presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. If you don't have that resource, there's still plenty of information and ideas for you to use.

Since the strongholds described in this article come with maps and basic background information, each of them is a potential adventure locale. You can use the NPCs and backgrounds presented here, or you can invent your own.

If you don't plan on allowing your players to use the detailed rules in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*, you can use the new room ideas in dungeons or give them to the PCs in a stronghold of your own design. Instead of following the price structure detailed in the supplement, you make the decisions concerning what magical augmentations are available, what room types are in each location, and what kind of stronghold each NPC has.

Even if you don't use any of the other ideas presented in this article, the maps make fine resources for strongholds that the characters occupy or for the strongholds of existing NPCs.

but some are designed for both. Bodies interred in these areas are usually embalmed to keep the body from rapidly decaying and to avoid the unpleasant odor and diseases that accompany a newly dead corpse.

Dining Area, Small

Size: .5 stronghold spaces
Cost: 500 gp
Prerequisites: None
This is simply a smaller version of the basic dining area described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. It can comfortably seat a half dozen occupants.

This room also shows how existing stronghold spaces can be adapted to fit very small strongholds or houses. Simply divide the price, space, and capacity of an existing stronghold space by the same proportions to get a smaller area.

Flying Creature Aerie (Large)

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 10,000 gp
Prerequisites: 1 groom
This room is large enough to house one Large creature. The room is circular, rising up to a domed ceiling, which retracts in sections. An expensive pulley system is subsumed into the price of the room, which connects to the interlocking pieces and causes them to lower, raise, and lock back into place. Creatures with the physiology to manipulate small objects and the intelligence to operate equipment can operate the pulley system themselves and open the roof.

An aerie must be on the top floor if the retractable opening is on the roof, but it can be on any floor if the retractable opening is on a wall.

Flying Creature Aerie (Huge)

Size: 2 stronghold spaces
Cost: 30,000 gp
Prerequisites: 3 grooms
This room is large enough to house one Huge creature. The room is otherwise similar to a Flying Creature Aerie, (Large).

Wall of Force Aquarium

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 60,000 gp
Prerequisites: None
This area is an aquarium containing whatever sea life the user adopts, with walls constructed from a single *wall of force* that has been shaped into a square and made permanent. The *wall of force* stops a mere foot and a half short of the ceiling, and four rectangular marble columns with inset handholds allow characters to climb up to feed the fish.

Game Room

Size: 2 stronghold spaces
Cost: 5,000 gp
Prerequisites: 3,000 gp in coins for bank money
A game room can help draw visitors to a keep and provide a source of income. Within this room, games of chance favor the house, and most participants walk away as losers, but a lucky few leave wealthier than when they entered. Tables are set up throughout the room, offering space to play card games and other games of chance. See the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* for details on how much revenue an income source generates and how an income source can affect the price of a stronghold.

Indoor Archery Range

Size: 3 stronghold spaces
Price: 3,000 gp
Prerequisites: Must be at least one hundred feet long
While most archery ranges are

New Rooms

The following rooms compliment and expand upon the list of available stronghold areas presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. Rooms are listed by the room name, the size (in stronghold spaces), the cost to build, the prerequisites for including the room in a stronghold, and the room number where their descriptions can be found in this article. Each new room is described in the New Stronghold Areas section.

Room Name	Size	Cost	Prerequisites	Room#
Classroom	2	2,000 gp	Teacher (Knowledge skill 10+ ranks)	D20,
Concealed Passages	1	2,000 gp		C19
Crypt	2	1,000 gp		D18
Dining Area, Small	.5	500 gp		A2
Flying Creature Aerie, (Large)	1	10,000 gp	Grooms	D14
Flying Creature Aerie, (Huge)	2	30,000 gp	Grooms	B10
Game Room	2	5,000 gp	3,000 gp in coins for bank money	C20
Indoor Archery Range	3	3,000 gp	Must be at least 100 feet long	D21
Kennel (Medium-size)	.5	600 gp	Medium-size or smaller creatures	C18
Lava Forge	1	20,000	DM's Approval, ground floor only	B9
Meditation Chamber	1	1,000 gp	Must be in a quiet area	D40
Observation Area	.5	400 gp	Must overlook a scenic area	D15A
Observation Walk	1	400 gp	Must look down upon a room	C19A
Ossuary	1	500 gp		B6
Sauna	1	4,000 gp	Must have a built-in heat source	B13
Strongroom	1	1,000 gp	Entrances to the room must be concealed	A7
Trap Control Room	1	30,000 gp	+100 gp per trap	C34
Wall of Force Aquarium	1	60,000		D16

outdoors, consisting of little more than a long stretch of field and hay bails or stuffed humanoid figures, indoor archery ranges create a smaller venue where people can come for regular practice or hold lengthy marksmanship competitions. Not only is the area protected from the effects of weather, other aspects of the environment are completely controlled, such as the ability to eliminate unwanted distractions.

Kennel (Medium-size)

Size: .5 stronghold spaces
Cost: 600 gp
Prerequisites: 1 groom (shared)
Each kennel houses a single Medium-sized animal or several smaller creatures. Typically, these are used to cage dogs and other domestic animals or to imprison creatures that either pose a threat or have been wounded and need to be nursed back to health. One groom can keep up to two stronghold spaces (four units) of kennels clean and functional.

Lava Forge

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 20,000 gp
Prerequisites: DM's approval, must be located on the ground floor
This room consists of the usual elements of a forge with the exception that all tools used are of masterwork quality. In the place of an ordinary forge is a magic item that is literally built into the foundation of the castle. The lava forge draws up lava from deep underground, allowing blacksmiths to craft metal items and equipment more easily; see the New Wondrous Architecture sidebar.

Meditation Chamber

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 1,000 gp
Prerequisites: Must be located in a quiet area
The meditation chamber is a place of peace and serenity where characters can go to escape the usual bustle of the castle. The elements commonly found within these rooms are polished stone benches, shallow pools of water, flowers, or other simple decorations. The goal of the architecture is to allow the occupants to relax and achieve a state of self-reflection.

Observation Area

Size: .5 stronghold spaces
Cost: 400 gp
Prerequisites: Must overlook a scenic room or area
These simple chambers peer into scenic rooms or areas and are usually separated from those areas by a window. They often have little more than a simple bench and sometimes a fireplace. Here people can sit and look at natural wonders of the outdoors without having to leave the comfort and warmth of the indoors.

Observation Walk

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 400 gp
Prerequisites: Must be located above a scenic room or area
This area is sometimes called an indoor balcony and is designed to look down upon common areas. A railing made of polished wood or metal allows people to look out over the room below without the fear of falling. Additional spaces can be purchased if needed.

Ossuary

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 500 gp
Prerequisites: None
Ossuaries are similar in nature to crypts, with two notable differences. They are considerably smaller, and rather than housing the full remains of the people interred here, the bones are literally separated into like parts and stacked on the floor and into alcoves. Although these rooms were designed as a way to respectfully inter numerous people in a small space, this has become a favorite way for necromancers to store components to be made into the undead. These rooms are not usually decorated; however, some have images engraved into the walls. Necromancers are more likely to decorate with artwork related to the undead while a family that has interred their loved ones are more likely to have images of celestials, cherubs, or other comforting art.

Sauna

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 4,000 gp
Prerequisites: Must include a heat source
The walls of this room are covered in a very dry hardwood that absorbs heat and reflects it back at the occupants. Saunas are typically used for relaxation, and many believe that spending time in a sauna helps them to lose weight or is good for their health, cleansing the system by increasing the amount of sweat produced. Wounded characters who spend an hour resting in a sauna recover one additional hit point per day. Saunas are usually heated by a large stove in the center of the room.

Strongroom

Size: 1 stronghold space
Cost: 1,000
Prerequisites: Entrances to the room must be completely concealed
This room is built for the sole purpose of concealing the activities of the occupants in case adversaries search the stronghold. There are no obvious entrances from outside the room. The area includes unadorned tables, chairs, and other basic furniture as the builder desires. The price of this stronghold space does not include the secret doors normally used to access the space nor *inscriptions of privacy* and other enhancements used to protect against magical means of spying.

Trap Control Room

Size: 1 stronghold space

New Wondrous Architecture

Lava Forge: This appears to be an ordinary forge, except that the material within is molten rock as opposed to coals and fire. This allows blacksmiths to work metals at much higher temperatures, giving them greater control over their creations. Swords, armor, rings, and other items made of metal may all be crafted with the *lava forge*. Normal metal items can be constructed for 5% less than the normal cost described in the *Player's Handbook;* this includes masterwork items. Magic items created with the *lava forge* are affected, but only the cost of the base item (such as a masterwork longsword) is affected; the cost of enhancing the item is not reduced.

Caster Level: 15; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *flame strike* or *delayed blast fireball*, **Market Price:** 15,000 gp.

Building the Predek Residence

Here's the cost of the Predek Residence using the cost structure from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. Note that costs can be modified by location, income sources, and other environmental factors. Always check with your DM when building a stronghold.

Room Number	Room Type	Stronghold Spaces	Price
A1	Common Area, Basic	2	1,000 gp
A2	Dining Area, Small	0.5	500 gp
A3	Kitchen, Basic	1	2,000 gp
A4	Training Area, Combat	1	1,000 gp
A5	Storage, Basic	1	250 gp
A6	Bedroom, Basic	1	800 gp
A7	Strongroom	1	1,000 gp
	Subtotal	7.5	6,550 gp
Exterior Wood Walls		0	0
Interior Wood Walls		0	0
	Total	7.5	6,550 gp

Cost: 30,000 gp + 100 gp per trap
Prerequisites: The entire castle must be fitted for this stronghold space at the time of construction

This room is filled with chains, pulleys, winches, and levers. With the throw of a lever, any mechanical trap with a manual reset within the stronghold that is connected to the system can be reset from here. These can be constructed so that traps can be armed one at a time, in small groups, or all at once. The most expensive portion of this room is the large mechanical trap-setting device and the room fittings to hold it, which are usually of gnome construction. From this room, chains and ropes snake throughout the walls of the stronghold, attaching to the traps that they activate. A castle cannot be retrofitted to accommodate this room without tearing down and rebuilding the affected walls.

The cost of this room is in addition to the costs of the traps in the stronghold. It does not allow one-use or magical traps to be reset remotely.

Predek Residence

This small wooden house makes a good short adventure location or a relatively simple base of operations for low-level adventurers.

Guthrum Predek (NG human male, Ftr4) is a tall, muscular man with bronze skin, brown hair that reaches his shoulders, dark eyes, and a full beard and mustache that he keeps well trimmed. Though he normally speaks in a booming voice, he can easily switch modes and speak eloquently. When his father passed away five years ago, he inherited a position within a secret society known as the Council of Nine. Prior to this, Guthrum had amassed a reputation as an able fighter with the local militia and accompanied several adventurers in search of a mythical lost sword called Aparalon's Wrath. While their adventures failed to unearth the sword, Guthrum's exploits left him a wealthy man by adventuring standards. He invested this money in a house in the local city where he began a horse shoeing trade. Beneath the house, he built a secret strongroom, providing a meeting place for the Council of Nine.

The Council of Nine believes that dark powers put great store in controlling the nearby area and that these powers threaten to engulf many good creatures in some unspeakable evil. Their observations have been diligently recorded for over 100 years. The journals contain records of the day-to-day lives of local leaders, their advisors, major local personalities, suspicious characters, and newsworthy occurrences. Their theories often link back to a single unnamed elf who has frequented the area for as long as the records cover. The records show that whenever this mysterious stranger passes through the area, strife in one form or another follows. In one case a plague took a mighty toll on the area, while in another instance the city's lord protector fell victim to an assassination, only to be replaced by a cruel despot.

Other members in this council include the current head of the local guard, a couple of prominent business men, a man known to most as a common thief, and a powerful conjurer. Once per week the group meets in the Predek Residence where they report the findings of their investigations and make plans to target new people whom they suspect. At the beginning of his affiliation with the Council of Nine, Guthrum believed the group to be paranoid conspiracy theorists, but he has now taken part in the foiling of several plots that posed serious threats to the city and has become a believer.

Compared to most structures normally considered to be strongholds, the Predek Residence counts as little more than a house. Guthrum's house is built on a half acre parcel of land that is lightly forested. A wooden picket fence surrounds his property and helps keep outsiders from spying on his activities. The house has 1-foot-thick masonry outer walls and 6-inch-thick wooden inner walls. The roof is finished in red tile and includes practical rain gutters. The main entrance to the house is a sturdy wooden door (hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 25). An additional secret entrance provides access to the rear of the house. Made of masonry matching the outer walls, it slides out and to the side (Search DC 25, hardness 8, 50 hp, break DC 28). Interior doors are made of simple wood (hardness 5, 10 hp, break DC 15). Unless otherwise noted, the floors are made of hardwood. The interior of the house consists of the following stronghold spaces:

Predek Residence Layout

A1. Common Area, Basic
An all-purpose room for inhabitants and guests, this room contains a bookshelf that is half filled with leather-bound tomes containing history and literature. A couch and two stuffed chairs sit against the walls, and a low table fills the center of the room. An inexpensive burgundy rug lies underneath the furniture and covers the floor in the center of the room. A stone archway leads to the dining area (A2).

A2. Dining Area, Small
A single table, 6 feet in length, and six comfortable chairs dominate this room. The walls are decorated with an assortment of framed pictures and shelves where keepsakes are placed. Two of Guthrum's non-magical masterwork longswords are hung on the wall,

crossing in front of a shield bearing his coat of arms: a lion surrounded by stars on a red background.

A3. Kitchen, Basic

A cast iron wooden stove sits along the north wall and is used for heating the house as well as cooking meals. A pantry is located in the northwest corner of the room, the scullery is located in the northeast corner, and counters that are used for preparing food line the walls.

A4. Training Area, Combat

This area provides space and equipment for melee combat training. A few practice weapons (subdual damage only) are stored in chests here.

A5. Storage, Basic

This room holds basic household supplies and foodstuffs.

A6. Bedroom, Basic

This room can sleep one or two people in comfort. It is a nondescript bedroom, with the exception that a hidden trapdoor is built into the floor and concealed by a rug. This trapdoor is 5 feet square and was constructed to appear indistinguishable from the rest of the floor (Search DC 15, hardness 8, 50 hp, break DC 28). A concealed handle pulls out and lifts the rest of the trapdoor to reveal a wooden stairway leading down to room A7.

A7. Strongroom

This isolated chamber is outfitted with spartan furnishings and conforms to the description of the strongroom area above.

Guthrum has set this room up with an oak table surrounded by nine chairs. On the table in front of each chair is a red candle. At the beginning of each meeting of the Council of Nine, each member lights his candle and then extinguishes it at the end of the meeting. Also here is a bookshelf where ledgers that date all the way back to the beginning of the organization are stored.

Hextor's Borough

Although few people in the community realize it, Morella Hurran (LE human female, Clr8) is a high-ranking priestess of Hextor and the main operative of the god within her city. Morella is six feet tall, thirty-two years old, with long curly black hair, fair skin, and blue eyes. She usually dresses in conservative, elegant clothing when in public, but she prefers the dark robes of a priestess of Hextor when in the privacy of her home or in the company of others of Hextor's faith. To preserve the secrecy of her standing with the church, all of her servants are also faithful to Hextor.

Morella's motives are the same as Hextor's: to conquer free people and bring them under iron rule. She was born into a noble family, and she is a respected member of the community, which is a factor that keeps her above suspicion with the local authorities. When given the chance, she gives sanctuary to both high- and low-ranking members of the church who pass through the area. Her larger goals are to establish spies and informants among the high-ranking politicians and merchants within the city, gather other allies both human and monstrous, and one day take control of the surrounding area.

Hextor's Borough is a mansion, occupying a five-acre plot of land that is heavily forested. Her house is located at the top of a steep hill that overlooks the surrounding area. The house is split between three wings and a dome, all of which have 1-foot-thick masonry interior and exterior walls. The central portion of her home is two stories tall while the other two wings are single story. The house is a natural gray, earthy color, and all roofs are green tiled A-frames, except for the dome, which is polished stone. Although Morella's family was quite wealthy before she inherited the family's fortune, the church of Hextor paid half the price for the mansion due to the services that she would ultimately provide to them.

The main entrance to the house is accessed through a sturdy wooden door (hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 25). Interior doors are made of good wood (hardness 5, 15 hp, break DC 18). Unless otherwise noted, the floors are made of polished stone. The interior of the mansion consists of the following stronghold spaces:

Building Hextor's Borough

Here's the cost of Hextor's Borough using the cost structure from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. Note that costs can be modified by location, income sources, and other environmental factors. Always check with your DM when building a stronghold.

Room Number	Room Type	Stronghold Spaces	Price
B1	Common Area, Fancy	2	6,000 gp
B2	Bedroom Suite, Fancy	1	5,000 gp
B3	Bath, Fancy	1	2,000 gp
B4	Servant's Quarters	1	400 gp
B5	Library, Fancy	1	3,000 gp
B6	Ossuary	1	500 gp
B7	Dining Hall, Fancy	2	12,000 gp
B8	Kitchen, Fancy	1	12,000 gp
B9	Lava Forge	1	20,000 gp
B10	Flying Creature Aerie (Huge)	2	30,000 gp
B11	Bath, Fancy	1	2,000 gp
B12	Chapel, Fancy	2	6,000 gp
B13	Sauna	1	1,000 gp
B14	Bedroom Suite, Luxury	2	25,000 gp
B15	Closets	0	0 gp
	Subtotal	19	124,900 gp
Exterior Masonry Walls			55,000 gp
Interior Masonry Walls			55,000 gp
	Total		234,900 gp

Hextor's Borough Layout

B1. Common Area, Fancy

Upon the walls of this room are crimson curtains and a mural depicting powerful armored warriors clashing in battle. A rug with a mauve-colored center and a blue border covers the majority of the floor.

B2. Bedroom Suite, Fancy

Somber furniture of high quality fills this elegant bedroom. Guests staying in Hextor's Borough are typically assigned to this room.

B3. Bath, Fancy

This is a simple, if well-appointed, chamber with a privy and washing area.

B4. Servants' Quarters

Devoid of comforts common in other areas of the house, these nearly bare chambers house minor members of the household staff. Six servants are quartered here.

B5. Library, Fancy

This room is lined from wall to wall with bookshelves containing books that are either related to theology, the worship of Hextor, or the plight of his followers. Five plush chairs circle a small round table in the southwest corner of the room. Morella and her visitors often come here to research various theological issues or to find a quiet place to read. The tomes in this room provide a +2 circumstance bonus to Knowledge (religion) and Knowledge (history) skill checks.

B6. Ossuary

This ossuary contains the remains of cherished members of Morella's family members. Though most of the people who pass through the keep are evil, none of her guests have been bold enough to ask for a supply of bones. A tapestry depicting Hextor's more violent form, a gray-skinned, six-armed monstrosity, hangs on the southern wall of this room.

B7. Dining Hall, Fancy

Furnished with high-backed wooden chairs and elegant dining facilities, this hall caters to the tastes of its owner's noble friends. As one of the few areas readily accessible to visitors who do not worship Hextor, it remains free of the symbols of the dark god.

B8. Kitchen, Fancy

Equipped to prepare high-quality food, this kitchen provides the chef with the equipment necessary to prepare almost any meal. The pantry is located on the northern half of the west wall, and the larder is located on the southern half of the west wall.

B9. Lava Forge

Morella employs a skilled blacksmith named Dirg (LE male dwarf, Exp6) to craft a number of items including swords and armor. Almost all of these items bear the sign of Hextor and are exclusively gifted to the followers of the dark god. Molten rock is regularly removed from this room and brought upstairs to heat the sauna (room C13). Extracting the molten rock does not require a skill check, although it causes 1d6 points of damage to those who touch even a small quantity of it without protection.

B10. Flying Creature Aerie, (Huge)

The very old black dragon Satharanos occasionally lairs in this area. Satharanos is a follower of Hextor, and it suits his current whims to pretend to be part of Morella's power base. Although Morella thinks that the dragon is a gift to her from Hextor, Satharanos is powerful enough to wreck the stronghold should he choose. He looks forward to the day when Hextor will give him orders to fly throughout the city, raining acidic terror upon the horrified people. Satharanos commands the operation of this room. He can cast *polymorph self*, and he often takes a human form to interact with cultists and other visitors. In human form Satharanos appears to be middle aged, with short, cropped red hair and a neatly trimmed beard. Satharanos spends the majority of his time in dragon form and is fed a regular diet of goats. Although the dragon is capable of operating the device to open the dome, he is rather lazy and prefers that his grooms do most chores for him. However, because of his relative independence, only 2 grooms are employed to see to his needs. The floor of this room is made of hewn stone. Although the dragon spends a good deal of time here, it is not foolish enough to leave itself vulnerable by sleeping here. Its true lair and treasure are miles away.

Four independent cranks are located in the northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest corners of the wall. The dome is divided into eight segments, and each crank lowers two opposite sides of the dome at once. It is rare that Morella orders the dome opened, and the people of the city are not aware that the dome is anything other than an ordinary section of her home.

B11. Bath, Fancy

This room is identical to the fancy bath stronghold space as described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*.

B12. Chapel, Fancy

Blood red curtains hang along the walls of this room, and the polished stone altar is black. Hextor's symbol of hate and discord, six red arrows facing downward in a fan, hangs above the altar on the east wall. His statue, that of an armored, handsome man

with dark hair and light skin, stands behind the altar just below his holy symbol.

B13. Sauna

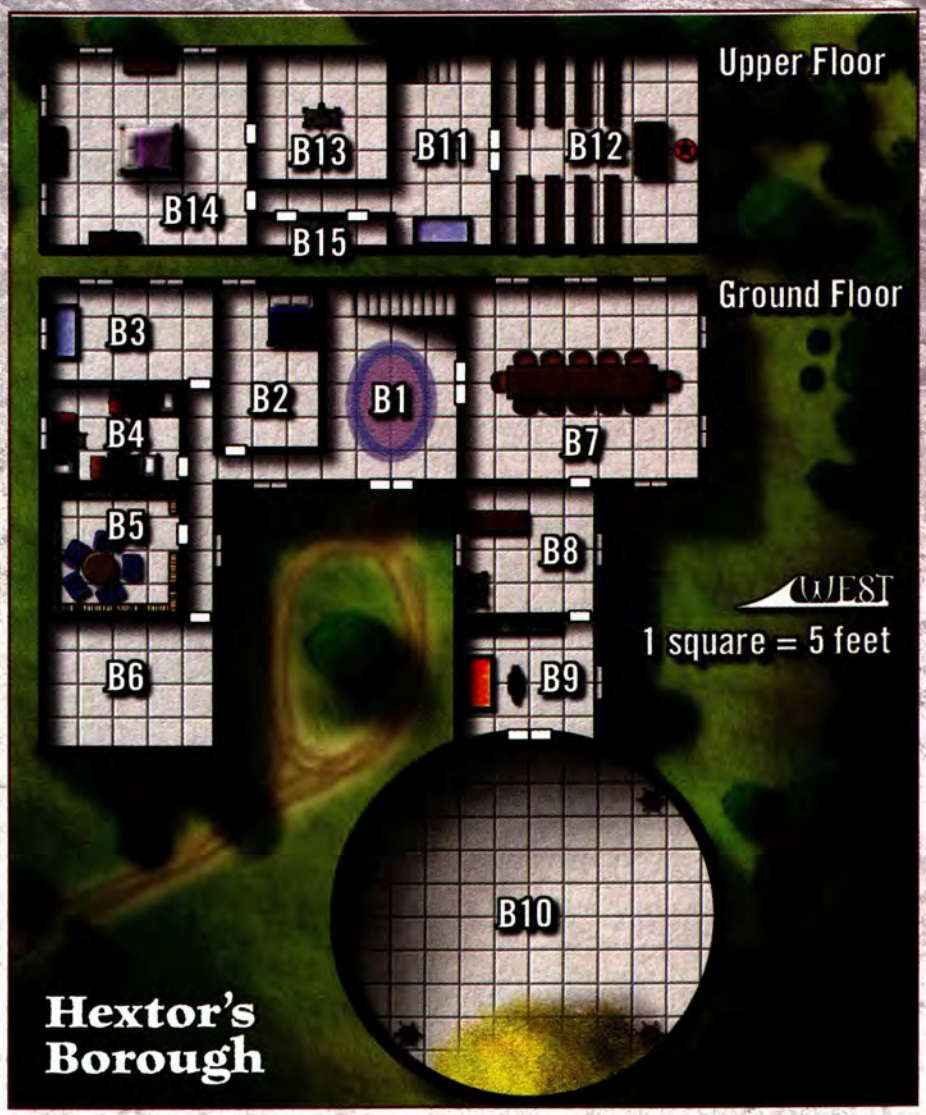
Morella's sauna is adjacent to her bedroom, where only her and any guests she wishes to entertain may enter. This room is heated by molten lava taken from room B9 and placed into a large cast iron bowl that sits atop a pedestal. Water is dumped over the lava to produce steam, increasing the humidity in the room. The only other people who come and go are the servants who replace lava.

B14. Bedroom Suite, Luxury

This enormous room serves as Morella's bedchamber. Purple curtains line the walls, and an enormous canopy bed sits in the center of the room facing the door. A wardrobe is set into the north wall, and she has two dressers made from polished dark oak on the south and west walls. Morella hides her stash of treasure in a secret compartment built into the bottom of her bed (Search DC 25).

B15. Closets

These closets contain common items the servants use to clean Hextor's borough.



Drekken's Rest

Drekken's Rest is owned by the half elf Silve Drekken (N half-elf male Rog12) who stands 5 feet 8 inches tall and has shoulder length sandy brown hair, blue eyes, and the pointed ears that clearly display his elven heritage. Born to a politically powerful but penniless human family, Silve grew up the black sheep and embraced a life of petty theft and adventuring. Over the years, his treasures grew along with his influence in the kingdom. It didn't take many years for people to forget that he was the black sheep of the Drekken family and welcome him as the champion who performed numerous heroic deeds for the betterment of the people. In time he was able to travel among the circles once reserved for the rest of his family, and taking full advantage of the opportunity, he began spying on his fellow nobles and hiring information brokers. His network of informants allowed him to amass even more wealth, and he was soon able to build a home that would become his most powerful tool for information gathering.

Shortly after Drekken's Rest was completed, Silve and a large group of adventurers began to strive in earnest to drive monsters from the surrounding areas. While the work was laborious and dangerous, there were no shortage of volunteers. After twenty years, the lands were safer than they had ever been, and the roads were under the protection of Silve's fortress. Drekken's Rest became known among the nobles as a wonderful place to escape, set among the pristine wilderness. In short, it had become a hunting lodge for the kingdom's elite.

The keep is laid out in an almost unimaginative manner, with the keep near the center of the area protected by the walls. The rooms within the keep are all square or rectangular, designed to appear of standard, if high-quality, construction. The spartan decor of the walls and the shape of the rooms lull many guests into overlooking the secret entrances and passages that abound in the house.

At the corners of the keep are flat-topped border towers. Set upon each tower is an innovative style of ballista designed to repel flying creatures, namely the dragons that once terrorized this region. The ballistae are mounted upon swiveling bases, allowing them to target creatures approaching from the air. For information on siege equipment "Bazaar or the Bizarre" in this issue.

The outer walls of the keep are constructed from light-colored masonry. The interior walls are made of wood, not only because wood is cheap and plentiful but also because wood absorbs sound better than stone, making the job of eavesdropping on guests easier. The doors in the outer walls are 10-foot-wide iron portcullises (hardness 10, 120 hp, break DC 28). The doors leading into the castle are heavy iron doors (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28), and the interior doors are made of strong wood (hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 23). The interior of

the castle consists of the following stronghold spaces:

Drekken's Rest Layout

C1. Barbican
This room provides the guards with a safe way to control entrance to the fortress.

C2. Entry Guard Towers
These structures include raised guard posts, providing good cover and observation points. They contain the pulley mechanisms that lift the portcullis attached to the towers. They match the guard tower clusters from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.*

C3. Guard Towers
These structures include raised guard posts, providing good cover and observation points.

C4. Outer Walls (Freestanding Walls)
The freestanding walls that enclose Drekken's Rest are 10-foot-high, 1-foot-thick masonry walls. A walkway runs along the top of the wall and grants access to the top levels of the guard towers (Area C3).

C5. Park
This area consists of a large, 50-foot by 20-foot pool. Three marble fountains in the shape of gargoyles circulate the water and add to the tranquil qualities of this area. Marble benches and tables are spread throughout the park, making this a common place for picnics and other relaxing activities.

C6. Stables
This building consists of wooden inner and outer walls. Occupants and guests of the castle trust that their horses and other mounts will be treated well here. Two grooms constantly see to the care of the animals sheltered within.

C7. Cavalry Base
This area provides housing for a large number of mounted troops.

C8. Trebuchets
Similar to catapults, but much larger and more destructive, these mighty weapons of war protect the keep from within its walls. In times of trouble, their awesome destructive force is called upon to lay waste to forces that would besiege the castle. Trebuchets are described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.* If you don't have that book, you can easily substitute heavy catapults from chapter 5 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide.*

C9. Common Area, Fancy
As well as being the entrance room to the keep, this is the main area where the people come to tell their tales, drink, and relax. The floor is made of polished stone, and curtains bearing the Drekken family heraldry decorate the walls of this room. The secret entrance that leads to room 19 lies behind a curtain. The edges of the secret door appear to be little more than the gaps between the wooded planks that make up the interior walls.

C10. Workplace, Basic (Brewery)
This is where the brewers produce Drekken's Ale, a world famous spirit that is distributed to the furthest reaches of the lands. The daily output of ale is typically six barrels per day, which are each sold for 15 gp.

C11. Storage, Basic
This room is where the barrels of Drekken's ale (produced in area C10) are stored. It is common to store ale for up to two weeks before merchants purchase them.

C12. Armory, Fancy
This well-appointed smithy is sufficiently equipped to provide a +2 circumstance bonus to Craft (weaponsmithing) and Craft (armorsmithing). The pictures that hang in this room are depictions of actual battles, and each are dedicated to those brave fighters who fell during the days when they still struggled to rid the region of the monsters that plagued it.

C13. Office, Fancy
This room houses much of the household's important documents. From here, the keep's shrewd bookkeeper tracks the amount of gold going toward expenses compared to the gold coming in from visitors, the game room, the tavern, stabling services, and the merchants that purchase Drekken's Ale.

C14. Bedroom Suite, Fancy
These fancy bedrooms are each built next to spy passages. These passages allow Drekken to eavesdrop and spy on his guests, often providing him with information regarding the hidden alliances and the undiscovered scandals of the nobles that frequently room here. This has led to several backroom deals that

have increased his overall influence within the royal court.

C15. Dining Hall, Luxury

This large and luxurious dining hall seats up to 30 diners comfortably. It is used for daily meals as well as large feasts. The polished table, the plush high backed chairs, and the heads of trophies that adorn the walls of this room all help make Drekken's hospitality the stuff of legends.

C16. Kitchen, Fancy

This room is a standard, if well-equipped, kitchen. The pantry is located in the southeast section of the room, and the larder is in the northeast corner that extends east from the main portion of the kitchen.

C17. Basic Storage Area, Hidden Stairway

At first glance, this room appears to be little more than a storage area. An *illusory wall* on the southern end conceals an additional 10-foot section, wherein the stairway down to the dungeon is hidden. Prisoners being led to the dungeon are blindfolded and spun around a few times before being led down in order to prevent them from learning where the entrance to the dungeon is located.

C18. Kennel

Silve Drekken keeps his cherished hunting dogs in these four stalls. Also in this room is a storage area where leashes, brushes, and clippers are kept. A single servant serves as the groom for this room, and he is responsible for taming, training, or restoring health to these animals.

C19. Concealed Passages

These cleverly hidden passages are the source of much of Drekken's influence. Despite their frequent use, few know of the well-hidden passages. It is a tribute to Drekken's discretion that visitors have failed to connect conversations held at Drekken's Rest with the pattern of Drekken's knowledge.

C19A. Observation Walk

This area is a main socializing area between the game room and the tavern. Also in this area is a stairway connecting levels 1 and 2 of the keep.

C20. Game Room

This room is responsible for much of Drekken's income. Drekken profits from careful attention to the gambler's conversations as well as the monetary intake of the gambling tables.

C21. Tavern, Fancy

This pleasant area can seat up to 20 patrons, and its fine ales and wines are responsible for a large part of the fortress's income.

C22. Lieutenant's Bedroom

This spartan bedroom favors function over luxury and finery. The lieutenant in charge of the local militia is quartered in this sparsely decorated room.

C23. Court Wizard's Bedroom

This basic bedroom is surprisingly plain considering the magical power and abilities of its current inhabitant. The court wizard Sildegash is quartered in this room, but he spends little time here when he is not sleeping.

C24. Bath, Basic

This area is simply a basic bath.

C25. Guard Post

Four guards are posted here at all times, and this number is doubled or tripled during times when Drekken fears for his safety.

C26. Throne Room, Fancy

Silve Drekken rules his corner of the world from this room, making the decisions that impact the commoners living in the surrounding countryside and villages. The walls of this room are draped in forest green curtains. To either side of the throne stand decorative suits of polished mithral armor. Each one carries a decorative broadsword in the right hand and a shield bearing the Drekken coat of arms etched in copper upon them in the left hand. The shield in the hand of the suit of armor on the southern side of the throne swings forward, triggering the secret door behind the throne to open. Drekken only opens this door when he is alone in the room or when he is surrounded by his most trusted aids.

C27. Training Area, Rogue

This area allows rogues to practice their skills of theft and breaking and entering. Padded dummies lined with powder, bells, or blades dangle from the ceiling or on ropes and pulleys, allowing rogues to practice picking pockets and balancing. Dozens of locks of various quality are forged into the wall; some might spring needle or gas traps—harmless except to the ego. Walls of various difficulty allow climbing practice as well.

C28. Bedroom Suite, Luxury

This is the room where Silve Drekken sleeps. It is the largest bedroom in the keep, and he has a personal luxury bath connected to this room (area 29). Silve's personal treasure is kept in 3 locked chests (amazing locks, Open Lock DC 40). Drekken carries the keys to these chests at all times.

C29. Bath, Luxury

This comfortable room serves as an excellent bath.

C30. Storage Area

This nondescript room is a simple storage area.

C31. Magic Laboratory, Basic
This room provides adequate room and equipment for most magical research.

C32. Treasure Room
Within this room are the more bulky and less common treasures Drekken has managed to accumulate over the years. The Dungeon Master can include treasure and other valuables in this area as needed. Since Drekken has constantly fluctuating income and cash reserves, it's quite easy to adjust the value of any randomly generated treasures down as well as up.

C33. Trophy Hall, Basic
The mounted and embalmed heads of numerous monsters line the walls here. Standing in the middle of the room are a total of six masterwork suits of armor, each clutching masterwork broadswords.

C34. Trap Control Room
The following traps lie dormant in the stronghold but can be activated if the castle is invaded:

Room C9: Fusillade of Darts: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger (tiles directly in front of the front door); manual reset (or by the device in this room); Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1, dart); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. area); Search (DC 19); Disable Device (DC 25). Market Price: 22,500 gp.

Room C17: Compacting Room: CR 6; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search [DC 25]); walls move together (12d6, crush); Disable Device (DC 22). Market Price: 25,200 gp.

Room C23: Whirling Poisoned Blades: CR6; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; hidden lock bypass (Search [DC 25], Open Lock [DC 30]; Atk +10 melee (1d4+4/19-20 plus poison, dagger), poison (purple worm poison, Fortitude save [DC 24] resists, 1d6 Str/1d6 Str); multiple targets (one target in each of 3 preselected 5-foot squares [just inside the door, in front of the closet, and to the side of the bed]); Search (DC 20). Market Price: 28,200 gp.

Room C26: Wall Scythe Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (2d4+8/X4, scythe); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 22). Market Price: 17,200 gp.

Room C35: Water Filled Room:CR7; mechanical; location trigger (areas just outside the doors to the prison cells); manual reset; multiple targets (all targets within the room); never miss; onset delay (3 rounds); Water; Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25). Market Price: 21,000 gp.

C35. Prison Cells
This large room contains 9 10-foot by 10-foot cells. Guards often joke with the prisoners about the water trap built into this room and the penalties for attempting escape, creating a situation where the prisoners will often discourage (sometimes violently) their mates from trying to break out.

C36. Guard Post
Four guards are posted here at all times, and this number is doubled or tripled during times when Drekken fears for his safety.

Combat on Tower Rooftops

Fighting on tower rooftops is a dangerous and foolhardy proposition. Nevertheless, as long as there are enemies that would attempt to escape pursuit by seeking out the most dangerous areas of the stronghold, sooner or later a fight will break out in these unlikely areas. In order to walk around on these rooftops, a Balance check (DC 15) must be successfully made each round. A successful check allows the character to move at half speed. A failed check results in no movement for the round, and a check that fails by 5 or more results in a fall. In order to avoid falling from the tower, the character must then make a Reflex save (DC 15). Success merely means that the character loses his footing and must spend the following round regaining his feet. Failure means a long drop, and sustaining 1d6 points of damage for every 10 feet fallen. Castle Baraendur's towers stand 30 feet tall, thus a fall from one would cause 3d6 points of falling damage.

The chore of staying on one's feet becomes even more difficult when in combat. The Balance checks must be made each round, and in addition to this, any hit dealing half or more of a character's hit points or a critical hit causes that character to make an additional check at a -5 penalty per situation.

Castle Baraendur

Three retired adventurers, formerly of the Company of the Chimera, established this castle along a major trade route. The company once traveled far and wide, encountering a full range of rare and unique monsters, eventually having a pivotal encounter with the avatar of St. Cuthbert. The avatar tasked them with the duty of making the small, dangerous area of this major trade route safer to travel, both by land and by sea. The company's final adventure was to track down and arrest the highwaymen that accosted travelers in the area and arrange for the building of this keep.

The former leader of the company, Vidacir Danver (LG human male, Ftr17) is now fifty-five years old, with a powerful frame, a trimmed beard, and dark graying hair. Vidacir usually dresses in dark grays or other subdued colors. Only rarely and in times of trouble does he don the armor he once wore as casually as a second skin. Although the three veterans claim to share power evenly, the other two usually defer to Vidacir's judgment on most issues.

Inverlum Kanos (NG human male, Wiz17) is sixty years old, but appears no older than a typical 45-year-old man. He is clean-shaven with shoulder length black hair that betrays a few inconspicuous streaks of gray. Since Inverlum took a position of leadership, he has changed his focus from offensive combat spells to magic of the Abjuration, Divination, and Conjuration schools. The people know him as mild mannered, witty, and highly entertaining when pressed for stories of past adventures. The few people that have been foolish enough to challenge his power have paid a dear price for their arrogance.

The youngest of the three, Larillin Shadroth (NG human female, Clr17) is forty-nine years old and a cleric of St. Cuthbert. She has a pale complexion and shoulder length red hair. She normally dresses in decorative gowns. Although she has been offered positions as the head of several large churches within some of the larger cities, she believes that because St. Cuthbert asked her to watch after this castle, she must stay with it until reassigned by the god himself.

Freestanding 20-foot-high masonry walls protect Castle Barendur, and an entire army base cluster is built into the ground floor. Most of the area within the walls is open, and it is used by the soldiers to practice their craft. Although the castle has been built and most of the rogues routed, there are still several troublesome warlords that have influence in the region and could start an uprising at any time.

The outer and inner walls are constructed from dark-colored masonry. The doors in the walls are 10-foot-wide iron portcullises (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 25), the doors leading into the

castle itself are heavy iron doors (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28), and the interior doors are made of strong wood (hardness 5, 20 hp, break DC 28). The interior of the castle consists of the following stronghold spaces:

Castle Baraendur Layout

D1. Dock, Extended
This large dock can accommodate two Gargantuan vessels or four smaller craft. Docking fees of 10 gp per day are collected from visiting ships. One of the king's war galleons is permanently stationed at the keep and can usually be found either at the docks or within five miles of this location.

D1A. Retreat Tunnel
This tunnel is forty feet from one end to the other, with stairways on either end that descend fifteen feet into the earth. This is normally kept open and can be accessed by anyone living at or visiting the castle. One end of the tunnel is in the killing zone (area D3) and the other is just north of the docks (area D1); the tunnel was built beneath the water table and is reinforced with masonry walls. If the defenders of the castle are forced to retreat, the soldiers can activate *walls of force* with a command word. These are set up on either end of the tunnel with the intent of blocking the invaders from following the soldiers into the castle proper.

D2. Barbican
This room is identical to the barbican stronghold space described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. The connecting guard towers have enormous pulley mechanisms located in each of the towers that are capable of lifting and lowering the portcullis.

D3. Killing Zone
These areas are lethal to any invading force that is attempting to enter through the main gates. Once the main portcullis has been knocked down or otherwise dealt with, the invading army must first pass through this area, leaving them open to arrow attacks from all sides. Defenders on the walls receive one-half cover.

D4. Stables
This building consists of wooden inner and outer walls. Occupants of the castle and guests trust that their horses and other mounts will be well treated here. Four grooms constantly see to the care of the animals sheltered within.

D5. Lord's House
This structure uses the same resources as an inn cluster as found in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*, except that its main function is to serve as a meeting place between the leaders of the castle and the people that represent the surrounding communities.

D6. Outer Walls
These crenellated walls are constructed from 1-foot-thick masonry and stand 20 feet tall.

D7. Trebuchets
This area is identical to area C8 above.

D8. Common Room, Fancy
This area has no set function other than to provide a comfortable space for socializing and relaxing. Occupants use this room as an all-purpose area.

D9. Army Base Cluster
This group of rooms houses up to 100 men at a time, providing basic barracks space, a mess hall, and weapons storage areas.

D10. Dockside Inn Cluster
This section of the castle provides a place for sailors and merchants using the castle's docks to find food and lodging, and it generates a substantial part of the fort's income. The inn is capable of hosting twenty travelers. Because this is located in a section of a castle, the guards are authorized to turn away any visitors wishing to stay here if they either don't like how the visitors look or if they've had unpleasant dealings with them in the past. Visitors resting here are not allowed to explore the second floor. Four guards are always stationed at the base and the top of the stairs.

D11. Chapel, Fancy
This pleasant facility is dedicated to the worship of St. Cuthbert.

D12. Common Area, Basic
Designed as a buffer zone between the combat training area (D13) and the chapel of St. Cuthbert (D11), this room is used to dispense food before and after worship and is used for church meetings and other gatherings.

D13. Training Area, Combat
This section of the castle provides training and practice facilities for the garrison and for other individuals interested in keeping their fighting skills sharp.

D14. Flying Creature Aerie (Large)
This specialized stable is described in the New Stronghold Areas section at the beginning of this article. It features a retractable roof and equipment necessary for holding and training flying mounts. There are a total of 4 griffon cages in this large room, and each cage contains 1 griffon.

D15. Courtyard
This room provides a pleasant outdoor diversion from the interior of the fort.

D15A. Observation Area
This room looks out upon the courtyard (D15) and has one of the two doors into that area.

D16. Wall of Force Aquarium
Because this castle exists in a warm climate, the aquarium is stocked with 2 sharks. The

Castle Baraendur Lower
Guard Tower
Guard Tower
Up
Up
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
Storage
Kitchen
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
Basic Tavern
D15
Servants' Quarters
Guest Quarters
D10 Dockside Inn Area
D16
D17
D19
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
Guest Quarters
D21
D18
Up
D14
D8
D11
D12
D13
Servants' Quarters
D18
Barracks
Barracks
Barracks
Barracks
Barracks
Barracks
D19
D9 Army Base Area
Barracks
D18
Dining Hall
D15
Officers' Barracks
D15a
D20
Kitchen
Barracks
Barracks
Up
Up
Guard Tower
Guard Tower

Castle Baraendur Upper
1square = 5 feet
Down
Up
Guard Tower
Guard Tower
Up
Down
S
D25
D26
D27
D28
D29
D24
D30
Residents' Quarters
Residents' Quarters
Residents' Quarters

Building Castle Baraendur

Here's the cost of Castle Baraendur using the cost structure from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. Note that costs can be modified by location, income sources, and other environmental factors. Always check with your DM when building a stronghold.

Room Number	Room Type	Stronghold Spaces	Price
D1	Dock, Extended	2	6,000 gp
D1A	Retreat Tunnels	1	29,300 gp
D2	Barbican	1	3,000 gp
D3	Killing Zone	0	0
D4	Stables, Fancy	1	9,000 gp
D5	Lord's House	8	8,000 gp
D6	Outer Walls 20'	1	126,000 gp
D7	Trebuchets	1	2,400 gp
D8	Common Area, Fancy	1	6,000 gp
D9	Army Base Cluster	29	24,000 gp
D10	Dockside Inn Cluster	16	12,550 gp
D11	Chapel, Fancy	2	6,000 gp
D12	Common Area, Basic	1	500 gp
D13	Training Area, Combat	1	1,000 gp
D14	Griffon's Hold	4	40,000 gp
D15	Courtyard	1	1,000 gp
D15A	Observation Chamber	0.5	500 gp
D16	Wall of Force Aquarium	1	13,150 gp
D17	Storage, Fancy	1	1,000 gp
D18	Crypt	2	1,500 gp
D19	Bath, Basic	0.5	800 gp
D20	Classroom	2	2,000 gp
D21	Inner Archery Range	5	3,000 gp
D22	Trophy Hall	1	2,000 gp
D23	Wizard's Sanctuary	2	127,000 gp
D24	Bath, Fancy	1	2,000 gp
D25	Bedroom Suite, Luxury	2	25,000 gp
D26	Storage, Basic	1	500 gp
D27	Auditorium, Fancy	1	4,000 gp
D28	Storage, Basic	1	500 gp
D29	Bedroom Suite, Luxury	2	25,000 gp
D30	Storage, Basic	1	500 gp
D31	Throneroom, Luxury	2	143,350 gp
D32	Guard Post	0.5	600 gp
D33	Residential Cluster	40	411,600 gp
D34	Bedroom Suite, Luxury	2	25,000 gp
D35	Storage	1	250 gp
D36	Bedroom Suite, Fancy	1	4,000 gp
D37	Chapel, Luxury	2	25,000 gp
D38	Study, Fancy	1	2,500 gp
D39	Library, Basic	1	500 gp
D40	Meditation Chamber	1	1,000 gp
D41	Study, Fancy	1	2,500 gp
D42	Library, Fancy	1	3,000 gp
	Guard Tower Cluster	0.5	9,100 gp
	Subtotal	**144**	**1,073,050 gp**
Exterior Superior Masonry Walls			193,050 gp
Interior Masonry Walls			250,250 gp
	Total	**144**	**1,516,350 gp**

floor is covered with sand, and what appears to be an ornamental cave juts up from the bottom. If explored, the cave turns out to lead to an underwater passageway, linking this room with D17, the only treasure room in the castle.

D17. Storage, Fancy (Treasure Room)

This room is identical to the Storage, Fancy stronghold space as described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. The only entrance to this room is through the tunnel accessed through the cave in room D16.

D18. Crypt

Three separate areas make up the crypt in this castle. Each room is reserved for the family members of the three lords of this keep. These rooms contain alcoves as well as waist-high islands that can fit up to 4 bodies in the alcoves built into the sides. Only a small handful of alcoves are currently in use.

D19. Bath, Basic

This room serves as a basic bath and privy.

D20. Classroom

These are large rooms filled with chairs, desks, and books where student can convey knowledge from a teacher to a number of learners. A range of topics from military tactics to simple arithmetic are taught here.

D21. Indoor Archery Range

This room is exactly like the indoor archery range described in the New Stronghold Areas section at the beginning of this article.

D22. Trophy Hall

The trophies of The Company of the Chimera's adventuring career rest here. Although valuable only as souvenirs and curiosities, the items include a horn from a Huge black dragon, the petrified head of a displacer beast, and several tapestries depicting the owners' exploits.

D23. Wizard's Sanctuary, Luxury

This area serves as a wizard's laboratory and also provides a sanctuary for teleporting spellcasters should the rest of the castle fall to enemies. The lack of doors forces opponents to find the location, an effort that can only be accomplished by mapping out the stronghold, and it requires them to either knock down the walls or find the teleporter that leads into this room. In either case, it gives the wizard time to plan an effective escape. While inside, the wizard cannot be scried, although he is able to use his own *scry pool*. (If you do not have access to the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*, you can substitude a *crystal ball* for the *scry pool* as long as you include the cost of the item in a character's equipment or the price of the stronghold.)

D24. Bath, Fancy
This room serves as a basic bath and privy.
D25. Vidacir Danver's Bedroom (Luxury Bedroom Suite)
This luxurious bedroom and living suite is inhabited by Vidacir Danver.
D26. Storage, Basic
This basic storage space usually holds tools and items used by the household staff.
D27. Auditorium, Fancy
This auditorium was built with acoustics and artistic impressions in mind, and it grants a +2 bonus to Perform checks made on the stage.
D28. Storage, Basic
This basic storage space usually holds tools and items used by the household staff.
D29. Inverlum Kanos's Bedroom (Luxury Bedroom Suite)
This well-appointed suite is inhabited by Inverlum Kanos.
D30. Storage, Basic
This basic storage space usually holds tools and items used by the household staff.
D31. Throne Room, Luxury
The three former adventurers meet in this room to determine local policy and make the decisions necessary to rule a region. A teleporter is built into the floor next to the north wall behind the throne, which is activated by speaking a command word. If a character speaks this word and is standing in the appropriate spot, she is teleported to room 23.
D32. Guard Post
This area provides a useful observation point for stationed guards and a checkpoint for roving sentries.
D33. Luxury Residential Cluster
The permanent non-military residents live in this area. Most have jobs or trades within or near the castle.
D34. Larrillin Shadroth's Bedroom (Luxury Bedroom Suite)
This well-appointed suite is inhabited by Larrillin Shadroth.
D35. Storage
This area provides a useful observation point for stationed guards and a checkpoint for roving sentries.
D36. Priest's Bedroom (Fancy Bedroom Suite)
Although no permanent guests reside in this functional chamber, it is reserved for priests of St. Cuthbert visiting the castle.
D37. Chapel, Luxury
Like the fancy chapel in level 1 (room D11), this chapel is dedicated to the worship of St. Cuthbert. Because this is the most elaborate chapel in the castle, Larrillin Shadroth holds ceremonies for the full-time castle inhabitants in this room, using the downstairs chapel for the castle's guests.
D38. Study, Fancy
Several of the stronghold's regular inhabitants use this room as a quiet work or leisure area.
D39. Library, Basic
This library contains books on nature and geology, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to the appropriate Knowledge skill checks whenever the library is consulted.
D40. Meditation Chamber
This plain chamber offers a place to pray or rest, and it is often used by visiting monks and priests who do not revere St. Cuthbert.
D41. Study, Fancy
Several of the stronghold's regular inhabitants use this room as a quiet work or leisure area.
D42. Library, Fancy
This library contains books on politics, architecture and engineering, and law, granting a +2 circumstance bonus to the appropriate Knowledge skill checks whenever the library is consulted. Inverlum Kanos consults this library often when the books in his sanctuary lack the information he needs.

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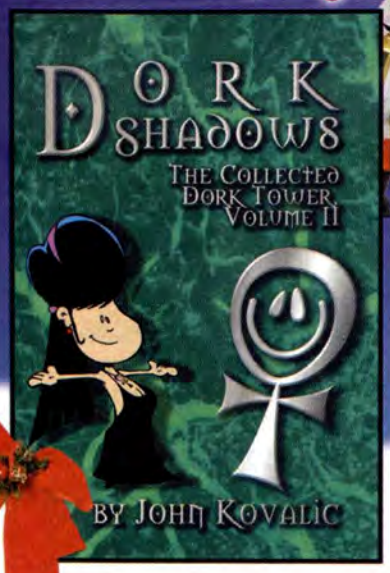

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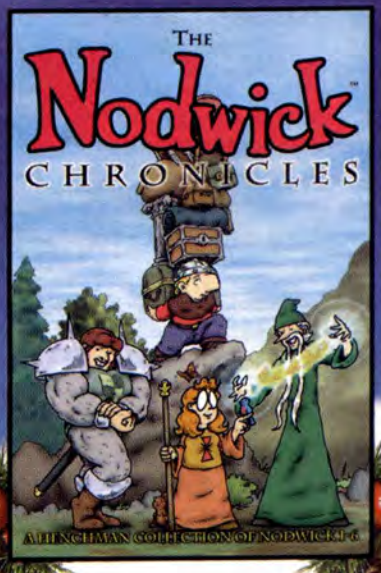

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Magic Walls, Moats, and Repairing Your Fortress

Mortar &

Korryn, Lord Korryn now, leaned over the edge of the watchtower, slowly surveying the land surrounding his newly established keep. A pair of deer stood, less than a bowshot away, grazing on the rough undergrowth left from clear-cutting the forest away from the stronghold.

Below, at the foot of the wall, stood Vellus. The portly wizard was gesticulating and muttering strange words that would put the finishing touches on Lord Korryn's new stronghold. The spellcasting culminated in a crescendo of arcane syllables as Vellus reached out and touched the narrow gap between two of the huge granite blocks. A magenta burst of vibrant energy coursed outward from the mage's fingertip, rapidly tracing its way along the crevices between the stonework. No sound accompanied the wave as it washed over the wall in a spiderweb of light that faded almost as quickly as it had ignited. In less than two heartbeats, the show was over. But its effects would linger.

Korryn looked again to the meadow just in time to see the deer sense what had just transpired. Their ears pricked up and the snow-white signal of their tails flashed as the pair of does sprung away. Nothing had startled them, Korryn knew. No, those poor creatures were just close enough to be the first to feel the effects of Lord Korryn's first line of defense.

The *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* presents rules for building a fortress and augmenting its walls with magic. Presented in this article are new wall augmentations for fortress builders to use. You'll also find expanded rules for building moats to impede invaders and ways to repair the walls that you've raised. As in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*, prices for the wall augmentations are for augmenting 800 square feet of wall.

Charged

Anyone nearing a *charged wall* will quickly take note of the small flashes of bluish-white energy that intermittently race along its surface. For those unfortunate enough to get too close, the light show turns more aggressive. Any creature within 10 feet of the front of the wall is struck by an arc of electricity causing 5d6 points of electrical damage (Reflex save, DC 14 for half damage). This occurs each round that the creature is near the wall. A creature touching a *charged wall* takes 10d6 points of electricity damage, but no Reflex save is allowed, nor will Evasion or Improved Evasion help avoid the shock, as the character is already in contact with the energy as it is generated.

When creating or purchasing this wall augmentation, choose which side of the wall it affects.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, or *call lightning bolt;* **Market Price:** 80,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 40,000 gp + 3,200 XP.

Dilating

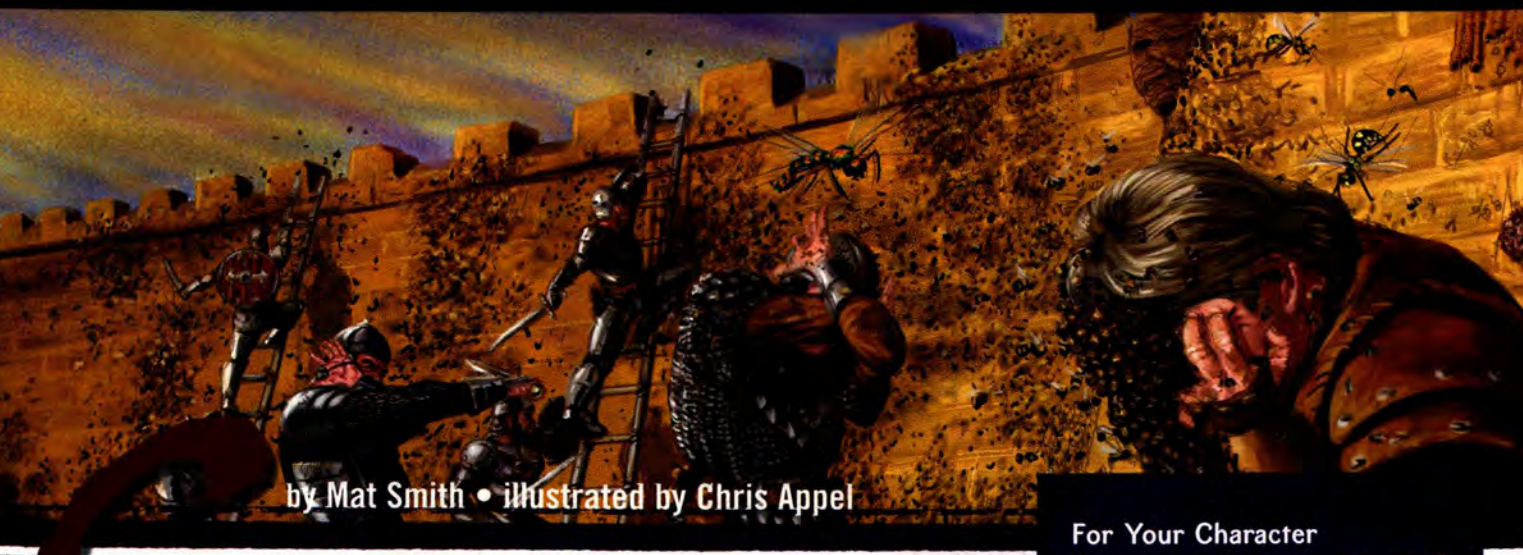
A *dilating wall* appears as nothing more extraordinary than a well-crafted but unremarkable structure. Those who know the secret of the wall understand it is anything but normal.

Small openings can be created by anyone who utters the proper command word, firmly presses into the dilating wall, and then "stretches" an opening to a desired shape and size. openings covering up to 18 square feet of the wall's surface can be opened in this manner, whether a single space or several smaller openings, as long as the overall area doesn't exceed the total 18-square-foot limit.

Thus, a *dilating wall* may allow up to ten hand or footholds, five arrow slits, two small-sized windows (1.5 by 2 feet), or one standard-sized doorway (large enough for a Medium-sized creature) to be opened.

Creating or closing an opening is a standard action. Each opening or handhold remains until forcibly closed.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *passwall;* **Market Price:** 22,500 gp; **Cost to Create:** 11,250 gp + 900 XP.



by Mat Smith • illustrated by Chris Appel

Stone

Fearsome

Only the brave and stout-of-heart can approach a *fearsome wall* without faltering. The structure radiates an aura of terror, causing all living creatures within 40 feet to sense the eerie and foreboding power that resides within. When a creature moves within 20 feet of a *fearsome wall*, it must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 16) or be panicked. A creature panicked by the wall suffers a -2 morale penalty on saving throws and flees away from the wall for 7 rounds. A fleeing individual has a 50% chance to drop anything it is holding. See Chapter 5 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for more information on the panicked condition. This is a mind-affecting fear effect of the Enchantment school.

When creating or purchasing this wall augmentation, choose which side of the wall it affects.

Builders interested in a stronghold space constructed with *fearsome walls* should first take a look at the *hall of fear* in the Wondrous Architecture section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *fear;* **Market Price:** 14,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 7,000 gp + 560 XP.

Hypnotic

The surface of a *hypnotic wall* is constantly awhirl with subtle color shifts and patterns of light and darkness. A creature that can see the wall and comes within 15 feet of the front of a *hypnotic wall* must make a successful Will save (DC 13) or become hypnotized by the wall for a number of rounds equal to 11 minus the creature's Hit Dice. Creatures of 11 Hit Dice or more cannot be affected by a *hypnotic wall.*

While hypnotized, a creature's Spot and Listen checks suffer a -4 penalty. Any potential threat (such as an enemy moving behind the hypnotized creature) allows the creature a second saving throw. An obvious threat, such as an attack, or shaking a hypnotized creature breaks it free from the effects of the *hypnotic wall.* (Shaking a creature is a standard action.) Upon breaking free from the hypnotizing effects of the wall, a creature may take a partial action before having to make another Will save (no save is required if the partial action is to leave the affected area). The effect of a *hypnotic wall* is a mind-affecting, Illusion (pattern) effect.

When creating or purchasing this wall augmentation, choose which side of the wall it affects.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *hypnotic pattern;* **Market Price:** 7,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 3,500 gp + 280 XP.

Infested

An *infested wall* teems with spiders, centipedes, beetles, and other small, vicious creatures. Swarms of beetles, wasps, bees, mosquitoes, gnats, and other ferocious flying insects fill the air around the wall. Anyone moving within 5 feet of an *infested wall* is relentlessly attacked by these pests, taking 1d4+1 points of damage every round regardless of Armor Class, invisibility, or damage reduction. A creature that does nothing but attempt to fight off the swarm of insects takes only 1 point of damage from the magically summoned swarm. Spellcasting or concentrating on spells or psionic talents within this area is impossible.

Creatures with 2 or fewer Hit Dice are driven from the cloud of insects at their fastest possible speed until they are 100 feet away. Creatures of 3 to 5 Hit Dice must make a Will saving throw (DC 17) or suffer the same fate. (The urge to flee is a mind-affecting fear effect.)

For Your Character

Purchasing and designing elements of your character's stronghold can be an entertaining and gratifying activity. Check with your DM to see if she'll allow you to use the Landlord feat from the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and then start designing—even if your character hasn't yet taken the feat. It will save you time later and gives your DM the opportunity to generate adventure ideas based upon your fortress.

If you aren't using the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook,* you can still use elements of this article to give your character more interest or more options. Your character might have an undead nemesis who sails a ship augmented by the vampiric wall augmentation. Perhaps the next battlefield your character steps onto could be beneficially altered by digging a moat with the *move earth* spell.

Each full 5 feet of swarming insects grants half concealment. A creature in the swarm can see out of it normally, but a creature in the swarm 5 feet away would have half concealment, and a creature in the swarm 10 feet away would have total concealment. A creature in the swarm has no concealment from creatures within 5 feet.

Weapons, smoke, *stinking cloud* spells, lightning, cold, and wind are ineffective against the plague, but fire effects can cause it to disperse for a time. Such an effect keeps the insects out of the effect's area for its duration. Thus, a *fire shield* spell would protect a creature approaching the *infested wall,* but a *fireball* spell would only disperse the insects for 1 round. A single torch is ineffective against the swarm. *Repel vermin* is also effective.

This wall augmentation affects all sides of the wall (except beneath the earth).

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *insect plague, summon swarm;* **Market Price:** 22,500 gp; **Cost to Create:** 11,250 gp + 900 XP.

Murky

Underwater strongholds have the daunting task of defending against creatures approaching from all directions. The dark, cloudy waters surrounding a structure built with murky walls make an assault a more difficult and time-consuming process.

This type of wall augmentation functions identically to the *fog veil* augmentation described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook,* but only in underwater settings.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *fog cloud;* **Market Price:** 3,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 1,500 gp + 120 XP.

Somnolent

Waves of sleep-inducing energy roll forth from the surface of a *somnolent wall.* Creatures with 5 Hit Dice or less that come within 15 feet of the wall must make a Will save (DC 11) each round or fall into a comatose slumber as if affected by a *sleep* spell. Sleeping creatures are helpless (see the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for a description of this condition). Normal sound will not wake an affected creature, but slapping or damage does. (Waking a creature is a standard action.) Upon being awakened, a creature may take a partial action before having to make another Will save (no save is required if the partial action is to leave the affected area).

Builders interested in a stronghold space constructed with *somnolent walls* should first take a look at the *bedchamber of restfulness* in the Wondrous Architecture section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.*

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *sleep;* **Market Price:** 3,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 1,500 gp + 120 XP.

Torpid

Creatures within 30 feet of a *torpid wall* must make a successful Will save (DC 14) each round or suffer the effects of a *slow* spell for as long as they stay within range of the effect. Individuals who fall under the influence of a *torpid wall* may only take partial actions, jump half as far as normal, and suffer a -2 penalty to AC, Reflex saves, and both melee attack and damage rolls.

When creating or purchasing this wall augmentation, choose which side of the wall it affects.

Builders interested in a stronghold space with *torpid* augmentation should first take a look at the *chamber of sloth* in the Wondrous Architecture section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.*

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *slow;* **Market Price:** 10,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 5,000 gp + 400 XP.

Vampiric

A chilling aura of negative energy emanates from the surface of a *vampiric wall,* draining the life from any and all creatures in close proximity. Living creatures that move within 10 feet of a *vampiric wall* must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 16) or suffer 1d4 negative levels. Regardless of the success or failure of the saving throw, a creature is then immune to the wall's level-draining power for 7 hours.

If the creature has as many negative levels as Hit Dice, it dies. Each negative level gives a creature a -1 competence penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, ability checks, and effective level. Additionally, a spellcaster loses one spell or spell slot from her highest available level. Negative levels stack. Assuming a creature survives, it regains its lost levels 7 hours later.

When creating or purchasing this wall augmentation, choose which side of the wall it affects.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *enervation;* **Market Price:** 17,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 8,500 gp + 680 XP.

For Your Campaign

Having characters own a stronghold might seem problematic, but there are plenty of reasons to allow your players to have fortress-building fun.

- Strongholds give the PCs a base of operations and gives your players a sense that their PCs have a home.
- The stronghold is a great place for site-based adventures of mystery or intrigue. The PCs will automatically take an interest in anything strange that happens on their own turf.
- Threatening the PCs' fortress is a quick way to grab your players' interest. Just be careful not to overdo it or cause so much damage that the players abandon the idea of owning property.

If you decide not to use the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* rules, you can use the wall augmentations as ideas for deadly dungeon rooms and the moat rules as the basis for dangerous pit trap concepts.

REPAIRING AND REBUILDING

by Matthew Sernett

Using the rules presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and the *Player's Handbook,* you can extrapolate the time and cost of repairing damage to the walls of your fortress, but the charts and information below might save you some time.

Mundane Repairs: When repairing a wall by non-magical means, someone must use the Craft skill to repair it. In most cases, the appropriate Craft skill is obvious, but some materials (like living wood) might require a repair crew to attempt repairs untrained.

You must then purchase enough raw materials to repair the wall. The cost of raw materials is shown on the Craft Skill Repair Calculations chart.

Choose one person to lead the crew; that person makes the appropriate Craft skill check (DC based on the wall material) representing a day of uninterrupted work. Other members of the crew attempt to aid by making a Craft skill check (DC 10), adding +2 to the crew leader's result if successful.

If the total check result succeeds in equaling or beating the wall's Craft DC, multiply the result by the DC. This represents the number of copper pieces worth of hit points repaired. Each Hit point of a wall is worth a certain number of copper pieces, as shown in the Craft Skill Repair Calculations chart. When enough work has been completed, a hit point is repaired. Hit points partially repaired do not count toward the wall's hit point total. Eventually, all the damage can be repaired.

If the check for the day fails, no measurable progress is made. If a check for the day fails by 5 or more, half the raw materials needed to do the repairs on that 10-foot section are used up.

For Craft skill check DCs, copper piece value of repairs per hit point, and raw material calculations, see the Craft Skill Repair Calculations chart.

Magic Repairs: A number of spells can speed the repair of walls or provide makeshift battle-repairs, as shown in the Hit Points Repaired By Spell chart.

Destroyed Wall Sections: Destroyed wall sections must be completely rebuilt using the price guidelines for building walls presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook*. If that section of the wall had a wall augmentation, the augmentation must be replaced on that section or it will be a blank space in the augmentation's coverage. The requirements to do so are identical to the original augmentation, but the cost is one-eighth that of the original.

Craft Skill Repair Calculations

Wall Type	Craft Skill Check DC	Repair Value/HP	Raw Material Cost/HP
Adamantine	30	1,250 cp	417 cp
Bone	13	500 cp	167 cp
Deep coral*	18	18 cp	6 cp
Earth, packed	12	34 cp	11 cp
Glass	11	5,000 cp	1,667 cp
Ice	20	1,667 cp	555 cp
Iron	20	334 cp	111 cp
Living wood*	15	167 cp	56 cp
Masonry	18	139 cp	46 cp
Masonry, superior	18	167 cp	56 cp
Masonry, reinforced	18	125 cp	41 cp
Mithral	25	1,112 cp	371 cp
Obdurium	40	1,429 cp	476 cp
Stone, hewn**	18	167 cp	56 cp
Stone, unworked**	18	167 cp	56 cp
Wall of force	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wood	15	84 cp	28 cp

*Note that these materials repair hit points on their own.
**It's difficult to "repair" stone. The cost represents replacing the damaged stone with masonry. This does not change how the stone is treated; unworked stone is still considered unworked stone if it is repaired.

BUILDING MOATS

by Matthew Sernett

The *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* offers rules for building moats for your stronghold. The rules presented here expand on those rules and offer ways for you to customize your moat as much as you can customize your castle.

Excavating a trench or hole 10 feet wide, 5 feet deep, and 10 feet long costs 100 gp. The cost doubles when you need to dig through rocky ground.

Hit Points Repaired by Spell

	Fabricate*	Make Whole**	Major Creation†	Minor Creation†	Stone Shape*	Wall of Iron††	Wall of Stone††	Wood Shape*
Adamantine	30	All damage	4.8/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Bone	13	All damage	.6/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Deep coral	18	All damage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Earth, packed	12	All damage	.1/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Glass	11	All damage	.12/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Ice	20	All damage	.35/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Iron	20	All damage	3.6/level	n/a	n/a	See below	n/a	n/a
Living wood	15	All damage	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	12 hp + 1.2/level
Masonry	18	All damage	.9/level	n/a	9 hp + .9/level	n/a	See below	n/a
Masonry, superior	18	All damage	.9/level	n/a	9 hp + .9/level	n/a	See below	n/a
Masonry, reinforced	18	All damage	1.8/level	n/a	18 hp + 1.8/level	n/a	See below	n/a
Mithral	25	All damage	3.6/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Obdurium	40	All damage	8.4/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Stone, hewn	18	All damage	1.8/level	n/a	18 hp + 1.8/level	n/a	See below	n/a
Stone, unworked	18	All damage	1.8/level	n/a	18 hp + 1.8/level	n/a	See below	n/a
Wall of force	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wood	15	All damage	1.2/level	1.2/level	n/a	n/a	n/a	12 hp + 1.2/level

Fractional hit points do not count toward the wall's hit point total.
*These spells require that you have enough raw material on hand to make the repairs and that the material is in place (next to the damaged section) when the spell is cast.
**This spell can repair all the damage dealt to a 10-foot section of wall so long as no significant piece of the wall is more than 5 feet away and that none of the wall was burned, melted, ground to powder, disintegrated, warped, or vaporized.
†These spells last for a limited duration as noted in their spell descriptions.
††The chart below indicates how many hit points a caster of a particular level can repair when casting a *wall of iron* spell on an iron wall. For casting *wall of stone* on hewn stone, unworked stone, and reinforced masonry, halve the hit points repaired per level result shown in the chart. When casting *wall of stone* on masonry and superior masonry, you repair one-third of the hit points repaired per level result shown in the chart.

Caster Level	9th–11th	12th–15th	16th–19th	20th
Hp/Level	15/level	22.5/level	30/level	37.5/level

When you dig through solid stone, you must multiply the base cost to dig by 5. With these basic guidelines in mind, you can extrapolate the cost of building any moat. See the Moat Section Costs sidebar for example prices of some moat sections you might want to use.

Cheaper Moats

Digging a moat can be an expensive endeavor. The prices listed in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* and those extrapolated in this article assume you are digging your moat by non-magical means. If you have access to a spellcaster who can cast *move earth,* digging your moat is easier, quicker, and cheaper. A *move earth* spell can dig up a moat of 5,625,000 cubic feat. That's slightly more than 703 20-foot-wide, 20-foot-deep, 20-foot-long trench sections. If you can cast *move earth* or get someone to cast the spell for free, digging your moat through earth is free. Otherwise, it costs 660 gp to have an 11th-level spellcaster cast the spell for you each time you need it or 1,650 gp for each *move earth* scroll you use.

Move earth can't move stone ground or rock formations in rocky ground, so you might need to move the stone manually or by casting spells such as *stone shape* and *rock to mud.* If you need those spells, check the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for scroll prices, or calculate the cost to have a spellcaster paid to cast the spells by using the formula shown in Chapter 8: Equipment in the *Player's Handbook* (caster level x spell level x 10). Casting spells to dig your moat is almost always cheaper than hiring workers to dig it manually.

Dry Moats

When you've finished digging your moat, what you have is a dry moat. The standard dry moat has sides too steep to walk up (at an angle somewhat greater than 60 degrees). This forces attackers to climb down and up the sides of the moat and prevents siege towers from being rolled up against the castle wall.

In game terms, a creature must make Climb checks (DC 0) to ascend or descend the moat wall. Although the DC is low, an attacker climbs at one-fourth his speed, he must free up his hands to climb, he does not gain his Dexterity bonus or shield bonus to AC, and a character who suffers damage while climbing must make another Climb check. Failing a Climb check by 5 or more causes the climber to fall, suffering damage for the distance fallen as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.* Failing a DC 0 check by 5 or more is improbable but possible; remember that encumbrance or armor check penalties and circumstance penalties can dramatically reduce a Climb skill check result.

Still-Water Moats

Still-water moats are simply dry moats with water in them. This doesn't cost anything extra, but before you flood your moat, there are a few things you should consider.

The main purpose of a still-water moat is to make it difficult to bring troops and siege equipment to the side of your fortress. With this in mind, you must decide how deep the water in your moat is.

A creature of a height equal to or smaller than the depth of the water needs to make Swim checks (DC 10) to move (as described in the *Player's Handbook*). A creature taller than the depth of the water with half or more of its body submerged moves at half speed and does not need to make Swim checks. A creature with less than one half of its height submerged has its speed reduced by one quarter and does not need to make Swim checks. Consider also that any fall into water is calculated as a fall to the surface of the water, and if the water is at least 10 feet deep, the first 20 feet fallen causes no damage and the next 20 feet fallen deals only 1d3 points of subdual damage for each 10 feet.

Moving-Water Moat

A moving-water moat requires a nearby river to fuel the motion of its water. This doesn't cost anything extra, but your moat must be shaped to follow a path that allows for the force of the water flow, and your stronghold must be located near an appropriate water source. Swim checks become more difficult in a moving water moat. Unless your fortress is placed in the middle of a raging river, rough water (Swim check, DC 15) is the strongest flow your moving-water moat can have.

Spike Damage

Modified Height*	Damage
0 ft.	— or 1d4**
10 ft.	1d4+1
20 ft.	1d4+2
30 ft.	1d4+3
40 ft.	1d4+4
50 ft. or more	1d4+5

*The effective distance a creature falls can be modified by depth of water, a monk's slow fall ability, a successful Tumble check, and many other factors. Once you have determined the effective distance fallen, use the appropriate modified height.

**A creature suffers this damage only when 10 feet of water helps to modify a fall of 20 feet or more to 0 feet of modified height. This represents the creature falling through the water to hit the spikes. Creatures that slow their fall to 0 feet by some other means suffer no damage.

Walled Moats

Walled moats have vertical walls of wood, stone, or any other wall material presented in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.* You might want to wall your moat to make Climb checks more difficult—but also to put wall augmentations on the walls of your moat. You can place the wall augmentations described in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook* on your moat's walls as though they are exterior walls by calculating the moat walls' surface areas.

To figure out the cost for building walls for your moat, consult the Freestanding Walls section of the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook,* but note that moat walls are not technically freestanding, and thus you do not need to double the thickness of lower wall layers. Remember too, that you can defray the cost of building walls by casting certain spells, as noted in the *Stronghold Builder's Guidebook.*

Spikes

Spikes can be placed at the bottom of any moat, endangering creatures that fall on them. Creatures must fall from a height of at least 10 feet to be endangered by the spikes, and the distance fallen modifies how dangerous the spikes are. Note that spikes deeper than 10 feet below the surface of water do not endanger creatures falling into the water.

Falling onto the spikes is very similar to falling into a spiked pit trap.

First you roll 1d4 for each 5-foot square the creature's body falls into. This determines the number of spikes that threaten the fallen character. Make a melee attack roll for each spike with a +10 bonus. Each successful hit causes the piercing damage listed for the modified height of the fall as described in the Spike Damage sidebar. Putting spikes in your moat costs 20 gp per spike-filled 5-foot square.

Tall Spikes

Sometimes a moat builder finds it advantageous to put tall spikes in a moat. You might want to put spikes tall enough to threaten creatures that fall in deep water, or you might simply enjoy the aesthetics of giant spikes. Either way, the spikes deal the damage for the modified height of the fall. This is a simple way to represent the fact that, although a long spike might cause more damage, having a taller spike means that a creature must fall a shorter distance to hit it. Putting long spikes in a 5-foot square costs 50 gp per 5 feet of spike height.

Example Moats

All the costs for the example moats below assume a 20-foot-long section of moat. The cost for each element is separated out so that you can decide which elements of the moat you need or want to pay for should you decide to use the example moat section to build a moat for your fortress.

Spiked, Still-Water
This moat is 30 feet wide and 30 feet deep. The bottom 8 feet of the moat is submerged in water, and spikes are placed at the bottom of the moat. Creatures that fall into the moat fall into the water and are endangered by the spikes, taking damage from the fall normally (the water isn't deep enough to change how a creature takes damage from the fall). Creatures that attempt to climb down the walls of the moat risk falling into the water, hitting the spikes, and drowning.

Digging Costs: 3,600 gp (earth), 7,200 gp (rocky ground), 18,000 gp (stone); **Spike Cost:** 480 gp.

Spiked, Masonry-Walled
This moat is 20 feet wide and 50 feet deep. Spikes are placed at the very bottom of the moat and the walls are made of 2-foot-thick masonry.

Digging Costs: 4,000 gp (earth), 8,000 gp (rocky ground), 20,000 gp (stone); **Wall Cost:** 5,000 gp; **Spike Cost:** 320 gp.

Fiery, Iron-Walled, Long-Spiked
The 6-inch-thick iron walls of this 30-foot-wide moat are augmented by the fiery wall augmentation and ablaze with flame as per the *wall of flame* spell. Both sides of the moat are fiery and set far enough apart that a creature takes 2d4 points of fire damage each round it is in the moat, no matter where it stands. The moat is 40 feet deep and filled with fearsome 5-foot-tall iron spikes.

Digging Costs: 4,800 gp (earth), 9,600 gp (rocky ground), 24,000 gp (stone); **Wall Cost:** 9,600 gp; **Spike Cost:** 1,200 gp; **Augmentation Cost:** 28,000 gp.

Hypnotic, Living Wood-Walled
This 30-foot-wide moat is only 10 feet deep, tempting invaders to climb or jump into it to cross the distance. Once inside the moat, such invaders realize their error. The 1-foot-thick living wood walls of this moat are augmented by the hypnotic augmentation described in this article and set just far enough apart so that no place in the moat is safe from the walls' hypnotic power. The floor of the moat is covered in low brush or tall grasses, making it possible to *entangle* and further impede foes.

Digging Costs: 1,200 gp (earth), 2,400 gp (rocky ground), 6,000 gp (stone); **Wall Cost:** 800 gp; **Augmentation cost:** 3,500 gp.

Charged, Fog-Veiled, Ice-Walled
This 10-foot-wide moat is 20 feet deep. The top ten feet of the moat are shrouded in fog (due to the *fog veil* augmentation on one side), disguising the electric flashes that play across the walls of the bottom half of the moat. This moat is a death trap for creatures not immune to electricity. Once in the lower half of the moat, such creatures are affected by electrical discharges from both of the 20-inch-thick ice walls. Without the ability to fly, a creature is almost guaranteed to perish, as climbing an ice wall is a difficult task (Climb check, DC 30), and doing so in the lower half of the moat subjects the creature to 10d6 points of electricity damage for touching the *charged wall*. Creatures above the fog can't see what is happening below, but they will certainly hear the screams of the moat's victims.

The difficulty is getting creatures to enter the deadly moat. A few creatures might fall in or climb down the moat walls, but if you want the moat to catch more wary foes, you'll need to use spells and tactics to push them in.

Digging Costs: 800 gp (earth), 1,600 gp (rocky ground), 4,000 gp (stone); **Wall Cost:** 8,000 gp; **Augmentation costs:** Charged 40,000 gp, *fog veiled* 750 gp.

Moat Section Costs

Trench Dimensions*	Earth	Rocky Ground	Stone
10' wide, 10' deep, 20' long	400 gp	800 gp	2,000 gp
10' wide, 20' deep, 20' long	800 gp	1,600 gp	4,000 gp
10' wide, 30' deep, 20' long	1,200 gp	2,400 gp	6,000 gp
20' wide, 10' deep, 20' long	800 gp	1,600 gp	4,000 gp
20' wide, 20' deep, 20' long	1,600 gp	3,200 gp	8,000 gp
20' wide, 30' deep, 20' long	2,400 gp	4,800 gp	12,000 gp
30' wide, 10' deep, 20' long	1,200 gp	2,400 gp	6,000 gp
30' wide, 20' deep, 20' long	2,400 gp	4,800 gp	12,000 gp
30' wide, 30' deep, 20' long	3,600 gp	7,200 gp	18,000 gp

*All trench sections in this chart are 20 feet long because that's the default length of a stronghold space. You don't need to build your moat in 20-foot-long sections, but using the dimensions in the chart might save you some time and math calculations.

Building a Better Rogue Trap

New Traps to Bedevil Invaders

by Penny Williams • illustrated by Jeremy Jarvis

The grizzled old trapmaker inspected the warlord's stronghold carefully. "So you need some traps to protect this little shack, do you?" he said at last. "Well let me tell you, there are plenty of choices. You can get 'em simple or complex, cheap or expensive, magical or not. And there's no right choice for every situation. The key is to use a little of everything. That way, you're bound to hit one that an intruder can't disable. And even those with the sharpest eyes won't spot 'em all." The trapmaker opened a large book he carried with him to a page filled with marvelously intricate sketches of various me chanical devices and arcane symbols. "I can make most any kind of trap, mechanical or magical. But it'll cost you . . . ."

Traps are often the first line of defense for a player character or NPC with something valuable to protect. Dungeon or castle, cave or tomb, every place of interest to adventurers in a D&D campaign world is bound to sport a trap or two. But as the new D&D game supplement *Song and Silence* points out, it takes time and money to outfit a stronghold with traps.

Types of Traps

Traps come in several broad categories. The best-known types are pits, melee or ranged attack traps, circumstance traps, and magical traps.

Pit traps are a dungeon staple. They can be of any depth, open or covered, plain or fancy. Some pits have sharp spikes lining the bottom to deliver extra damage, or even poison, to an unwary invader. Others might have something even more insidious at the bottom—snakes, acid, water, or worse.

Melee and ranged attack traps make attack rolls when triggered. These include traps that fire arrows, darts, or spears, as well as statues that swing their weapons at those who pass. Like pit spikes, the weapons used in attack traps might deliver poison as well as damage.

Circumstance traps include all the classic, never-miss traps, such as rooms that fill with water, crushing walls, gas-filled chambers, and the like. Most traps of this type take time to finish off their victims.

Magical traps deliver spell effects when triggered. Spells that are themselves traps are called spell traps;

those that deliver some other spell effect are magic device traps.

Of course, it's also possible to combine traps of the same or different types to create a more hazardous situation. For example, a trap that knocks a character down and then delivers a melee attack at +4 (against a prone opponent) is an excellent use of resources.

Choosing the Right Trap

Not every trap works for every location. A pit trap is fine for a dungeon, where all that's below it is earth. It's not such a good choice for the entrance to a second-floor chamber in a fortress—unless of course the owner doesn't mind the occasional thief dropping onto his dinner table.

The next issue to consider is what you want the trap to protect. Fragile objects are particularly difficult to trap effectively, since many kinds of traps can cause breakage when triggered. If you want to keep a delicate tiara safe from thieves, a trap that sends spears hurtling through the room or drops a stone block on the area is a poor choice. A better option might be a trap that fills the room with poison gas, or a pit near the pedestal on which the object rests.

Next, decide how deadly you want the trap to be. Do you want it to have a good chance of killing the intruder, or is it better just to capture her? If the trap is in a dungeon, mortality isn't a real issue. But if it's supposed to guard the treasure room in your castle, the trap stands a good chance of catching a curious child, careless servant, or clumsy friend at some point. Finding your son or daughter dead in the jaws of your trap is poor recompense for keeping your treasure hoard safe. Naturally, you can't expect any trap to hold a live, experienced rogue for very long, but if it's in an inhabited area, it might not need to—especially if you've rigged it with an alarm to rouse the household while the trap holds the intruder.

Extra Frills

Once you've decided on a trap that fits the location as well as the object or area to be protected, there are a few other issues to be addressed.

First, consider the traffic you expect through the area. Do you want to be able to get past this trap yourself? What about your family members, servants, or troops? If you expect legitimate traffic through the area, a bypass is essential. This could be a hidden switch, a lever, or even a lock that disables the mechanism.

Next you must select a trigger. Spell traps have their own trigger conditions, but for any other type, you have a choice. A location trigger sets off the trap when someone steps on a certain spot. Proximity triggers are similar, except that they don't depend on where someone stands; they set off the trap when someone gets close to it. You can also use detection spells to further refine a proximity trigger so that it sets off the trap only when a certain kind of creature comes close.

Finally, decide whether you want the trap to reset itself automatically. For mechanical traps that's an expensive option, but it's free for magical ones. Some traps actually break when they're sprung, such as a pit trap whose cover is so thin that it won't hold the intruder's weight. For these, a repair reset is the only real option. Others, however, might require a manual reset (putting everything back into position yourself), or have no reset capability at all.

The old man stared at the warlord thoughtfully. "Let me tell you about some of the traps I'd recommend for this place. You did say money was no object, didn't you?"

Outdoor Traps

"Let's look at the outdoors first," the old man said. "Here's an obvious trap," he continued. "But thieves can't seem to resist trying to skirt it. This pit is a work of art. It has polished stone edges that slope down a bit, and they're coated with grease in a 3-foot radius around the edge. What you want to do is have it block the only path to an area you want to keep undisturbed."

Obvious Pit Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; Reflex save (DC 30) avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes for 1d4+2 each); Search (DC 2); Disable Device (DC 20).
Market Price: 5,100 gp.

For Your Character

Whether you build your stronghold or acquire one by feat of arms, traps can be an essential part of your character's base. Like in *Song and Silence*, the cost to buy or build one of these traps can be calculated by examining the trap's market price or cost. Listed below are the calculations for costs, required feat or skill check, and market price of each item. Listed costs assume you can cast any required spell yourself. The time it takes to build such traps can be derived by consulting the Craft skill and Craft Wondrous Item feat in the *Player's Handbook*.

Trap	Craft Wondrous Item Feat or Craft (Trapmaking) Check	GP Cost	XP Cost	Market Price
Birdies in a Cage Trap	DC 25	3,667 gp	–	11,000 gp
Cage-Drop Trap	DC 20	4,500 gp	–	13,500 gp
Disintegrate Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	33,000 gp	2,640 XP	66,000 gp
Entangle Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	2,500 gp	200 XP	5,000 gp
Falling Door Trap	DC 25	5,733 gp	–	17,200 gp
Forcecage Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	47,000 gp	3,640 XP	94,000 gp
Gray Ooze Pit Bottom	DC 25	2,533 gp	–	7,600 gp
Hand Crusher Trap	DC 30	15,633 gp	–	46,900 gp
Insanity Mist Spray Trap	DC 25	6,500 gp*	–	16,500 gp
Major Creation Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	25,000 gp	2,000 XP	50,000 gp
Obvious Arrow Trap	DC 20	1,100 gp	–	6,600 gp
Obvious Pit Trap	DC 20	1,700 gp	–	5,100 gp
Out of the Frying Pan Trap	DC 25	4,500 gp	–	13,500 gp
Pit Trap	DC 20	2,333 gp	–	7,000 gp
Polymorph Other Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	14,000 gp	1,120 XP	28,000 gp
Suggestion Trap	Craft Wondrous Item	12,500 gp	1,000 XP	25,000 gp
Teleportation Circle	–	–	–	2,800 gp
Thunderstone Trap	DC 25	930 gp*	–	2,730 gp
Timed Poison Gas Trap	DC 25	46,000 gp*	–	54,000 gp
Timed Spears Trap	DC 20	3,000 gp	–	9,000 gp
Water-Filled Room	DC 25	4,000 gp	–	12,000 gp

*Includes full cost of the poison or alchemical item.

For Your Campaign

Traps add an element of tension to any adventure and make for memorable situations. Just be careful not to overuse them, or every game session will slow to a crawl. If you're already having that problem, stop using traps for a while, and when you reintroduce them, try something new:

- Instead of trapping a hall or a particular object, place a trap in an important encounter room of the adventure. Let the PCs stumble in during a tense combat or have the villain trigger it at a dramatic moment.
- Try using traps to keep the PCs in a room rather than out of it. Have the traps set to allow the PCs to enter unhindered, but activate when they try to leave. This is a good opportunity to use *teleport circle* traps; they can be set to teleport PCs that step on them back to the center of the heavily trapped dungeon.
- Make traps a part of a villain's strategy to control an invader's movement. In addition to causing damage, a trap in the villain's stronghold might also close off a passage, forcing the PCs to go a different way. When traps close or open specific passages, both the PCs and the villain can use them as part of their strategy. Of course, the villain doesn't need to guess what a trap will do. . . .

"This one is ideal for protecting an outbuilding or a home in the woods," the trapmaker stated. "You want a reasonably experienced druid to cast the spell so that it'll hold the intruder for at least five minutes. That should be enough time for you to get some soldiers out there for a capture."

***Entangle* Trap:** CR 2; magic device; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; spell effect (*entangle*, 5th-level druid, Reflex save [DC 11] half speed); Search (DC 26); Disable Device (DC 26). **Cost:** 2,500 gp + 200 XP.

Main Floor Traps

"Now for the main floor," the old man said, leading the warlord back inside. The two walked to a four-way corridor. "Your treasure room is this way, right? Sometimes you want an obvious trap. Not only does it mess with intruders' minds, since they wonder whether a real trap would be this easy to spot, but it can also help to persuade intruders that they're heading in the right direction. See, adventurers often think that because there's a trap, it must be protecting something. So if you trap the corridor leading to the kitchen with traps so obvious you'd have to be blind to miss them, chances are you'll shunt a lot of fortune-seekers off in that direction."

Obvious Arrow Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; hidden switch bypass; Atk +20 ranged (1d6/x3, arrow); Search (DC 5); Disable Device (DC 25). **Market Price:** 6,600 gp.

"I also have a few that are good for trapping and holding a thief for a long period," he continued. "This one is great for those situations when you're protecting a site that's checked only once a day."

***Forcecage* Trap:** CR 8; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*forcecage* [windowless cell version], 13th-level wizard, intruder caught and contained for 26 hours); Search (DC 32); Disable Device (DC 32). **Cost:** 47,000 gp + 3,640 XP.

"Now for this one, you have a premade cage concealed behind a ceiling panel. When the intruder steps on the pressure plate, the cage falls and catches him. A basic cage like this is nice for catching a thief and confining him for a short time. You need to have troops who can respond to the noise of the trap pretty quickly though, or any thief worth his salt will be out before anyone arrives."

Cage-Drop Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; confinement; Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 25). **Market Price:** 13,500 gp.

"Of course, your classic remove-and-confine trap is the teleportation circle," said the old man with a wink. "It takes a very experienced wizard or sorcerer, but you can't beat the results. After all, this one can get a whole party of intruders if you prepare it right. Just set the circle to teleport everyone in it to a holding cell that you've set up down in your dungeon, then go deal with them at your leisure. Of course, you'd better make sure that the destination is really secure, or you've wasted this spell. One fellow just arranged to teleport the intruders into a cell at the town prison. Seems he knew that location unusually well. Doesn't hurt to have an antimagic field in effect on the holding area too, so they can't use magic to get loose. If you want to add a really cruel touch, you can set a second trap on the holding cell to summon a really long-winded, boring creature, like a celestial, to serve as a guard and lecture the miscreants on the evils of stealing until they scream for mercy."

Teleportation Circle: CR 10; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*teleportation circle*, 20th-level wizard); Search (DC 34); Disable Device (DC 34). **Cost:** 2,800 gp to hire NPC spellcaster.

"Now here's your ultimate alarm trap. Not only does it alert everyone for half a mile around, it also deafens the intruder. It's nothing more than a big pile of thunderstones suspended in a net. 'Course, you can use a ceiling panel to disguise it a little better than that. When the intruder trips the trap, it drops the thunderstones."

Thunderstone Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; no reset; alchemical effect (deafness, Fortitude save [DC 15]); multiple targets (all targets within a 10-ft. radius); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 16). **Market Price:** 2,730 gp.

"Here's a classic trap of the nonlethal type. This trap turns your intruder into some innocuous creature, like a toad or bunny rabbit. You can get fancier with it, of course, by turning her into a mouse and making sure your cat sleeps in that room."

***Polymorph Other* Trap:** CR 5; magic device; touch trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*polymorph other*, 7th-level wizard, turn target into toad); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30). **Cost:** 14,000 gp + 1,120 XP.

"Then again, you might want your trap to deliver the maximum possible level of destruction. Disintegration

usually gets rid of the intruder much more neatly than other traps," he continued. "There's only a little dust to sweep up. The problem with trapping valuables that you have on display in your manor house is that the remains of thieves can really scare your housekeeping staff, not to mention leaving ugly stains on your rugs."

***Disintegrate* Trap:** CR 7; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*disintegrate*, 11th-level wizard, ray, Atk +6 ranged touch, Fortitude save [DC 19] for 5d6 damage); Search (DC 31); Disable Device (DC 31). **Cost:** 33,000 gp + 2,640 XP.

"And for this secret niche . . ." The old man rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "This little beauty is great for putting in small places where a thief has to stick her hand in to retrieve some treasure. The nice part is that your intruder is a little hampered in fighting her way out of your stronghold after having a hand crushed."

Hand Crusher Trap: CR 7; mechanical; proximity trigger (alarm); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search [DC 30]); Atk +25 melee (1d8+8; heavy mace; target suffers a -2 penalty on attacks and skill checks that use the affected appendage until healed); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 20).
Market Price: 46,900 gp.

"Then of course, you have poison traps of various kinds. These can be deadly, but more often to family members than to intruders. You might find them useful, though.

"Here's a trap that's built into a wall decoration. I usually use a little sculpture of a gargoyle or lion with an open mouth really near the spot I want to protect, like a secret door. The proximity trigger is designed to trigger the trap when anyone gets within a foot of the spot. Then the insanity mist sprays out of the mouth of the carving. Insanity mist might or might not stop a thief in his tracks, but he's likely to start making mistakes on the way out and often gets caught just because he doesn't have the sense to be careful anymore."

Insanity Mist Spray Trap: CR 5; mechanical; proximity trigger; manual reset; gas; poison (insanity mist, Fortitude save [DC 15] resists, 1d4 Wis/2d6 Wis]); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 25).
Market Price: 16,500 gp.

"This trap is good for delivering multiple doses of poison to the same target," the old man said. "Unless she's completely immune, she's likely to succumb eventually. The best bet is to time the firings very close together, so they can deliver several doses before the miscreant gets away."

Timed Poison Gas Trap: CR 6; mechanical; timed trigger (1/round); automatic reset; gas; poison (burnt othur fumes, Fortitude save [DC 18] resists, 1 Con/3d6 Con]); Search (DC 22); Disable Device (DC 16).
Market Price: 54,000 gp.

Upper Floor Traps

The two walked companionably upstairs. The warlord was obviously impressed by the extent of his guest's knowledge. The trapmaker turned another page in his book and pointed to it.

"This is a ceiling-mounted trap, so there's often room to put it in the upper story," the trapmaker said. "You put a 10-foot by 10-foot panel in the ceiling above the area you want to protect and fill the opening above it with stirges. When the trap springs, the grate pulls back and lets the stirges drop on the hapless thieves. 'Course, this one needs regular maintenance; after all, you have to make sure there's an open air vent and keep the stirges fed 'till fresh dinner appears. It goes off when someone touches a target object—a door, a display case, or even a chest—and it covers a wide area."

Birdies in a Cage Trap: CR 5; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Atk +6 melee (1d3-4, bite; attach; blood drain); multiple targets (up to five stirges per target in each of two adjacent 5-ft. squares); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 255).
Market Price: 11,000 gp.

"Here's one that's great for turning away less-experienced thieves without killing them," the trapmaker continued. "Use it if you're feeling forgiving, or if you have children with sticky fingers. Of course, it works best when the intruder has come alone, so he doesn't have companions to dissuade him from taking outside suggestions. You can use either a touch trigger on the object you don't want stolen, or a location or proximity trigger if you don't want someone to go into a chamber at all.

"The idea is to have the trap talk the intruder out of the crime, but you have to make it sound reasonable. The two spell effects are separate; you just have the magic mouth propose a course of action, such as 'That's not really a silver tray. It's just a clever copy. Why don't you take that attractive inkstand instead? It's probably quite valuable.' Or perhaps, 'You might want to leave all that gold behind and run for your life. Several dozen soldiers will be here in just a moment.' I've even seen this one work: 'You know, a life of crime is so dangerous. Why don't you become a scribe instead?' If the suggestion spell that goes off at the same time takes effect, the thief might just do what's . . . well, suggested. And even if the suggestion doesn't work, a particularly dumb thief might act on the idea anyway."

***Suggestion* Trap:** CR 5; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*suggestion*, 5th-level wizard, Will save [DC 14] resists); spell effect (*magic mouth*, multiple traps (one *suggestion* trap and one *magic mouth* trap); Search (DC 28); Disable Device (DC 28). **Cost:** 12,500 gp + 1,000 XP.

Dungeon Level Traps

The two walked down to the catacombs below the manor house. The trapmaker rubbed his hands and smiled. "Perfect!" he crowed. "I have just the thing. This trap's pretty slick, if you'll pardon the expression. It's a fairly standard pit, but lining the bottom is a gray ooze. It's basically two traps in one—the intruder has to fight the gray ooze to get out of the pit safely."

Pit Trap: CR 2; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 25) avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 20). **Market Price:** 7,000 gp.

Gray Ooze Pit Bottom: CR 4; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1 plus 1d6 acid, slam; improved grab; corrosion; constrict [1d6+1 plus 1d6 acid]); Search (DC 25); Disable Device (DC 20).
Market Price: 7,600 gp.

"And this one covers a 30-foot length of corridor, with mechanisms on both sides. Spears jut out of the walls in random-seeming patterns set on a timer."

Timed Spears Trap: CR 3; mechanical; timed trigger; automatic reset; Atk +20 melee (1d8/x3, longspear); multiple targets (up to three attacks per target in each of six 5-ft. squares [three rows of two] each round); Search (DC 10); Disable Device (DC 20). **Market Price:** 9,000 gp.

"This is great for a place where you can install a big, heavy, fake door and pass it off as the door to something important," the trapmaker said with a wink. "The more decoration you put on the door, the better. Thieves always think lots of door hardware and runes means there's good stuff behind it. When the intruder touches the door, it falls outward on top of her."

Falling Door Trap: CR 4; mechanical; touch trigger (attached); manual reset; Atk +25 melee (2d6, door); Search (DC 24); Disable Device (DC 16). **Market Price:** 17,200 gp.

"And here's a magical variation on the old falling block trap," he continued. "This one uses major creation to make a stone block right above the thief's head. 'Course, you don't want this to go off when she's standing right by your prized crystal vase."

***Major Creation* Trap:** CR 6; magic device; location trigger; automatic reset; spell effect (*major creation*, 10th-level wizard, Atk +25 melee, [2d6 damage, stone block]); Search (DC 30); Disable Device (DC 30). **Cost:** 25,000 gp + 2,000 XP.

The old man looked down the corridor, smiled, and turned to another page in his book. "This trap uses that time-honored combination of fire and grease. Everyone knows how unhealthy that is. When the trap goes off, one mechanism dumps oil onto the floor and another turns several nearby wall sconces upside down, dropping torches into the grease. Since the greased floor makes it tough to move at full speed, or even at all; intruders usually take some time to get out of the fire area. This one you want to reserve for an area with stone walls and floors."

Out of the Frying Pan Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 25) to move at half speed over grease; Reflex save (DC 20) for half damage from fire; fall (grease); burning (1d6/round, fire); multiple targets (all within a 10-ft. square area); Search (DC 20); Disable Device (DC 20). **Market Price:** 13,500 gp.

"Rooms that fill with water are a classic," he said, spreading his hands in an expansive gesture. "They're effective enough, but tough to engineer. You have to be able to introduce water quickly and pump it out when you're finished with it. And you can't use this in rooms that contain items that can be damaged by water. The basic idea, of course, is that when someone trips the trap, the door to that rooms seals shut and water starts to rush in. It takes several minutes for the miscreants to drown with this kind of system, but it makes for a significant fear effect, and some evil folk take a perverse sort of joy in this kind of trap."

Water-Filled Room: CR 5; mechanical; location trigger; automatic reset; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. by 10-ft. room); never-miss; onset delay (3 rounds); water; Search (DC 15); Disable Device (DC 22). **Market Price:** 12,000 gp.

"Well, those are my best suggestions for this place," the old man said, stopping next to a decorative wall carving of a satyr.

The warlord smiled cruelly. "Get to work then. Or did I not tell you that by coming here, you've signed into my service?" he said, drawing his sword.

"I don't believe you mentioned that," said the old man calmly. "But then again, I think I failed to mention that I worked on this building before you moved in." Reaching behind him, the trapmaker flicked a hidden switch and smiled as a dagger flew from the carved face and buried itself in his host's arm. "I'm sure I brought along the antidote for that poison," said the old man. "I have it here somewhere. But let's talk about my price first. . . ." D

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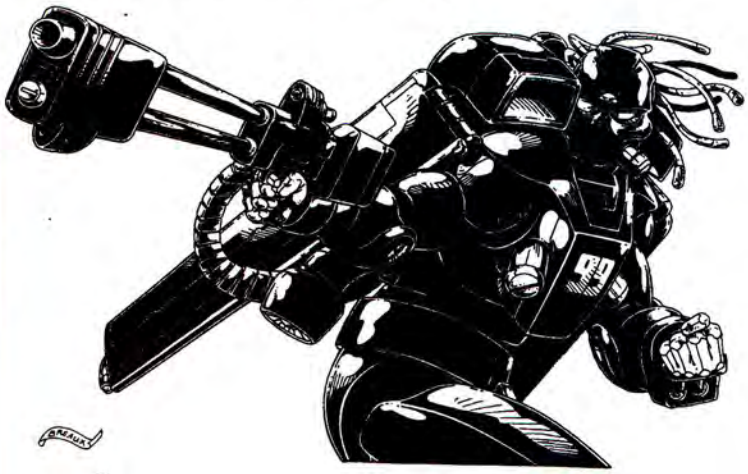

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TOWNS

With and Without Pity

Communities and Their Alignments

by Robin D. Laws • illustrated by Larry McDougall

Lord Erreion clambered up onto the bench and then stepped over to stand on the table. The various drinkers in the dank and smoky tavern swiveled their heads toward him.

"Good people of Searbh!" he declaimed. But, instead of rapt attention, his words provoked only scornful laughter.

"Good people?" chortled a one-eyed halfling. "Someone gave this fellow faulty directions!"

Erreion's companions reached furtively for their weapon-hilts.

Chapter three of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* includes a section on town generation that shows us how to determine who runs a community and what these leaders' alignments are. Now let's take a closer look at these power centers and how they affect communities, with an eye toward adding texture and excitement to our towns and cities. They serve as a veritable gold mine of plot hooks.

A power center is a person, group, or creature who exercises complete or partial control over a community. A kindly, white-bearded town mayor can be a power center, as can a ferocious demon who dwells in a well and demands that a flotilla of virgins be annually sacrificed to his dark masters. Larger communities often have multiple power centers—the citizens of a single city could at the same time enjoy the wise leadership of the mayor and suffer the depredations of the demon. When power centers espouse clashing alignments, they fight for supremacy. These struggles might take place behind the scenes, as subtle political maneuverings, or they might spill out into the streets, as bloody clashes explode between contending factions.

First Impressions

Alert PCs can guess the alignments of a community's power centers just by walking around and getting acquainted with the people. DMs who prefer to gloss over this sort of thing can allow PCs to learn about the power centers of a town through Gather Information checks. Obtaining more specific information is harder, and the information sought affects the DC of the skill check.

DC	Information Sought
DC 10	General mood only; you can tell if people are friendly or not, but that's it.
DC 10	Name of most obvious power center (usually the legal ruler)
DC 18	Names of all power centers
DC 20	Names of all power centers and their relative strength
DC 25	Names of all power centers, with an explanation of which ones are allied and which are opposed

One Power To Rule Them All

Smaller communities tend to have one power center. However, this doesn't have to mean that their political situations are boring or static.

Degrees of Authority

Not every power center has the same degree of control over its community, even when no rivals threaten its position. To determine the extent of a power center's influence, consult the following chart. Higher results allow for more dramatic story possibilities. Always remember, though, that you should never use a random roll when you already have a desired result in mind.

Roll 1d10 and consult the following chart.

Add 2 for evil power centers.
Subtract 2 for lawful power centers.
Subtract 2 if the area is prosperous.

1d10	Degree of Authority
1-2	Assured
3-7	Middling
8-9	Tense
10	Shaky

Assured: An assured power center exercises confident authority over a community. People can't imagine that the government's composition will change in the foreseeable future, and most are pleased with that fact. Because their support for the government (or governing official) is steady, officials don't have to keep close tabs on the populace. No one can remember the last time she had to lift a finger against internal dissenters or outside troublemakers. If the common folk thought that something threatened the established power center, they'd rise up to aid their current rulers.

Middling: Most power centers enjoy middling authority. The common folk don't question the power center's right to rule but won't much care if a similar ruler takes his place. They make the same mild complaints that people everywhere make against governments of all kinds: taxes are too high, life isn't what it used to be in the good old days, and children don't respect their elders any more. People might enjoy complaining or poking fun at their social betters, but they'd never dream of challenging them.

Tense: If a power center's authority is tense, the people are restive, and the government is occasionally forced to take active measures to clamp down on dissent. Officials, thugs, or law enforcement officers constantly roam the streets ready to harass, threaten, arrest, or even assault apparent troublemakers. When strangers are about, citizens are afraid to make even the mildest complaint against the power center. They know that the power center has built a network of informers and busybodies ready to report the slightest hint of disloyalty. Among others they trust, they'll condemn the power center, but they won't organize against it. People believe that any attempt at rebellion would be swiftly stamped out. (Chaotic powers can still launch crackdowns against a populace, but they'll be haphazardly applied. As opposed to lawful powers, who actually go to the trouble of identifying their real enemies, chaotic types lash out against anyone unlucky enough to attract their attention.)

Shaky: A power center with shaky authority is unpopular and openly flouted. It might have already tried to crack down on dissidents, but the people no longer fear it or its supporters. The power center clings to power only because no single rival has yet gathered the resources to topple it. Maybe its opponents are divided, or perhaps there's no better candidate or group to take its place. At best, a small band of loyalists, who think they're better off supporting the current power center than taking its place, have circled around it.

PCs new to a community can determine the local power's degree of authority by going out and rubbing elbows with shopkeepers, bartenders, and passersby. This is a Gather Information check with a DC of 15. An exception occurs in the case of tense authority, which requires a DC of 20. If the PC gets a result lower than that, the people, afraid the PC is an informant, profess their loyalty to the power center. The PC might, at the DM's discretion, be allowed a Sense Motive check to determine why the Gather Information check didn't work.

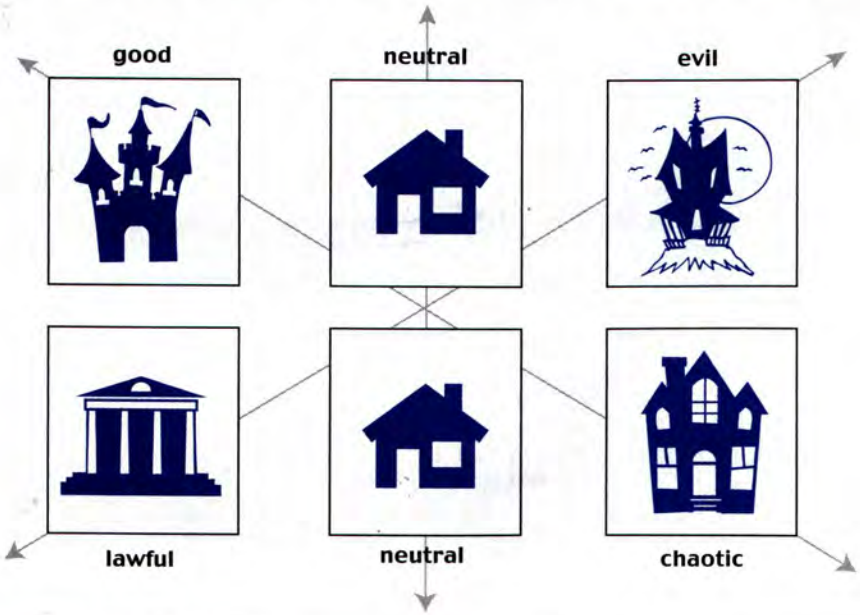
Prevailing Alignments

When a community has a single power center, the prevailing alignment among the locals is usually the same as the power center's. Although this is not always the case.

Assured: Power centers with assured authority almost always share the same alignment as the people they govern.

Middling: If a power center's authority is middling, there is a 50% chance that the general alignment of the people is the same as his. Otherwise, roll on the following chart to see how it differs.

1d6	Community Alignment Differs By . . .
1-2	1 step on Good vs. Evil axis
3-5	1 step on Law and Chaos axis
6	1 step on both axes



Use of the alignment axes is explained in the Using the Alignment Axes sidebar.

Tense: If a power center's authority is tense, its people always follow a different alignment.

1d6	Community Alignment Differs By. . .
1-2	1 step on Good vs. Evil axis
3-4	2 steps on Good vs. Evil axis
5	2 steps on Good vs. Evil axis, 1 step on Law and Chaos axis
6	2 steps on both axes

Consequently, you'll usually have an evil power cracking down on a good populace, or a good power keeping an evil citizenry under control. An example of the first case would be the classic evil usurper who's gotten rid of the rightful lord. In the second instance, you might see an intrepid paladin cleaning up a town inhabited by notorious bandits.

Shaky: A power center whose grasp on authority is shaky might be unpopular because its alignment differs from that of the population. This is true 60% of the time, in which case you use the chart below.

1d6	Community Alignment Differs By . . .
1	1 step on Good vs. Evil axis
2	1 step on Law and Chaos axis
3	1 step on both axes
4	2 steps on Good vs. Evil axis
5	2 steps on Good vs. Evil axis, 1 step on Law and Chaos axis
6	2 steps on both axes

The other 40% of the time, the community's alignment is the same as the power center's. The power center shares the community's goals, but it has been inept in realizing them. The good people of a small village might be dissatisfied by their headman's failure to negotiate favorable grazing rights with their neighbors. An encampment of depraved raiders might be ashamed at their khan's recent defeat in combat, even though he's just as dedicated a destroyer and pillager as they.

Powers In Conflict

Larger communities are run by multiple powers. As noted in the Alternative Power Center Alignment Chart sidebar, you might find it dramatically appropriate to use the alternate chart to determine their respective alignments.

After choosing the community's alignments, figure out who the competing power centers are. These can include guild leaders, merchants, land owners, hereditary rulers, appointed or elected officials, crime bosses, church officials, oracles, philosophers, and even monsters. The various alignment results will suggest types of factions: Evil individuals are more likely to be crime bosses than philosophers.

Relative Strengths

Next, determine the relative strength of each power center. Roll 2d10 for each power center. (Make it 1d10 if you want them less evenly matched.) After noting the result for each, grab a calculator and total all of the results. Then go back to the result for each power center and proceed to the chart. For communities in predominantly good regions, subtract 16 from your result. In predominantly evil regions, add 16. For communities with multiple power centers, apply these modifiers only to the first power center you generate.

d%	Alignment
01-15	Lawful Good
16-25	Neutral Good
26-42	Chaotic Good
43-48	Lawful Neutral
49-52	True Neutral
53-58	Chaotic Neutral
59-74	Lawful Evil
75-84	Neutral Evil
85-00	Chaotic Evil

Your choice of charts also depends on the role communities play in your game. If they're primarily rest stops between dungeon adventures, stick to the official chart. PCs will crave the stability it offers. On the other hand, if you regard communities as backdrops for adventure, your group will enjoy the greater variety of situations the alternate chart allows.

Alternative Power Center Alignment Chart

The Power Center Alignment chart (4-42, on page 137 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) supposes that lawful individuals are much more likely to hold and exercise power than chaotic types. This follows a world-building technique that establishes logical premises and then builds on them.

Another valid way of developing your world is to start with dramatic principles and then create explanations to support your decisions. For dramatic purposes, chaotic-controlled communities are exciting. They offer fluid, ever-changing situations into which PCs can wander, with interesting trouble ensuing. Unstable political situations generate more plot hooks than fixed ones. Multiple power centers become more fun when they're more likely to have opposing alignments that inspire ongoing strife.

The logical justification for this dramatic choice is as follows: if you look at our real world today, or at almost any historical era you care to name, the average person is much more likely to live in political chaos than under an orderly regime. We who lead comfortable existences in modern, industrial democracies enjoy a level of safety and stability unknown in medieval or ancient times.

Further, a chaotic community need not be one in which the streets reverberate with the sound of continual rioting, with looting and vandalism the order of the day. A community with a chaotic bent might simply have rulers making decisions according to momentary political instinct, without reference to laws and precedents. This is not unrealistic; rule by fiat was far from uncommon in the pre-modern world. The rulings of a wise, chaotic good leader can be at least as admirable as those of his lawful equivalent.

A chaotic community might also be one in which the schemes of competing factions continually collide, with unpredictable, jumbled results. In other words, chaotic communities need not be places where order has completely broken down; they can just as easily resemble peaceful but factionalized places.

Justification dispensed with, we

figure out what percentage of the total it represents.

Let's say you're working out the power centers for the large city of Rethen-Dhul. Large cities get three power centers. Using the alternate alignment chart, you get these results: neutral good, lawful neutral, and lawful evil.

You decide that the neutral good character will be the hereditary ruler, Princess Araine. The lawful neutral power is Hharandro, the Chief Justice, to whom the laws of Rethen-Dhul grant considerable independent authority. Finally, we have the lawful evil senator Cleander, who is also a wealthy landowner.

You roll 2d10 for each, with the following results: Araine, 16; Hharandro, 12; and Cleander, 14. That adds up to 42, of which Ariane gets 38%; Hharandro, 29%; and Cleander, 33%.

Thus we see that Araine is roughly the most powerful of the three, but that Cleander and Hharandro are both close behind. Politics in Rethen-Dhul is precariously balanced; any two of the powers can team up to block any action by the third.

Relative strengths can and should change over time, especially when the PCs get involved. You might decide that the outcome of an adventure will change the power balance by a certain amount. You also decide who gets the lost power: One leader might gain it at another's expense by acting against him. If each leader's failures or successes are independent of his rival's power, they gain or lose in equal measure.

For example, the PCs become involved in a plot to recover stolen gems from one of Cleander's paramours. You decide in advance that if they can expose the theft to the citizens of Rethen-Dhul, Cleander's power share will drop to 28%. Since this is a failure of Cleander's, not a success by one of the other two leaders, each of them gets an equal share of the power Cleander loses.

In a sustained political game, the party might even create its own faction, building its power over time.

Using The Alignment Axes

To find the specific alignment most community members follow, use this diagram, which breaks the alignments down into a Good vs. Evil axis, and a Law and Chaos axis.

Start by noting the power's position on the axis in question. It may help you to place a token on that space on the diagram.

For example, you've determined that the people of Abad-Thrul differ from their power center, the sorceress Patrara, by one step on the Good vs. Evil axis. Her alignment is neutral evil, so you start in the last box in the diagram's top row.

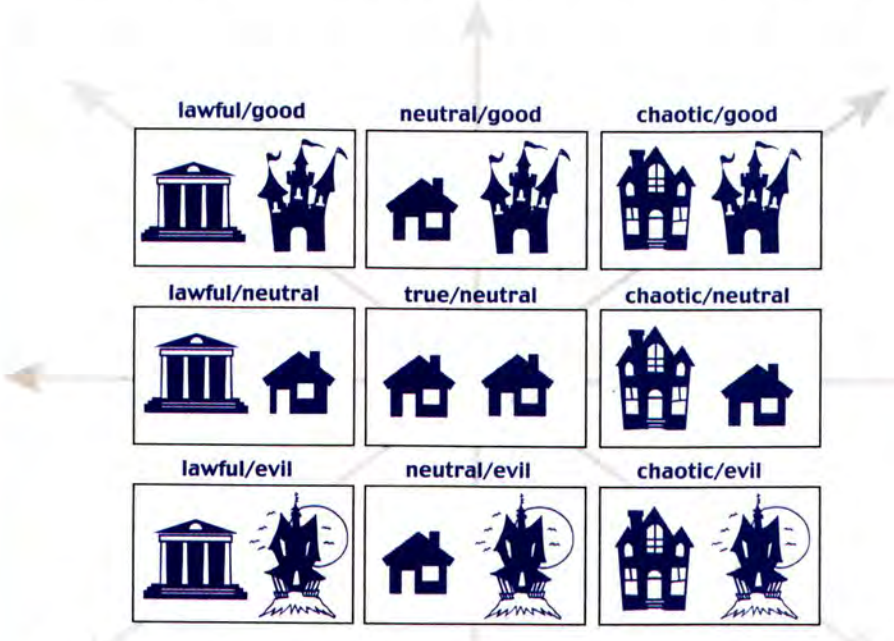
You can only move the token to an adjacent square in its current axis.

There's only one direction to go from the evil space—toward the left. You move the token one space, landing on neutral. So, while Patrara is neutral evil, most people in Abad-Thrul are neutral.

If a token starts on a neutral space, there are two possible directions. Roll any die; go left on an even result, and right on an odd result.

Yyrvarad is the neutral good power of Thamarace. His people differ from him by one step on the Law and Chaos axis. You start on the neutral space, then roll an odd number, which moves the token one space to the right. The people of Thamarace tend toward chaotic good.

If you get to the end of a row, stop there.



Prevailing Alignments

To find the prevailing alignment of a community with several power centers, determine whether each faction's power is popular or coerced. Popular leaders draw their power from the enthusiastic support of a large segment of the community. Coercive leaders rule by making people afraid of them. They might field private armies, control mighty magical artifacts, or summon monsters to devour their foes.

For each power center, choose whether it is coerced or popular. If you'd like to determine the result randomly, roll on the following chart. Add 1 to your die result for good characters; subtract 1 for evil characters.

1d6	Source of Power
1-3	Coerced
4-6	Popular

Araine is a good character, so you add 1 to her die roll of 2, for a 3. She's a coercive leader, ruling by force; she must have a mighty royal force of arms at her command. Hharandro, neither good nor evil, gets an unmodified 4.

He's a popular leader. For Cleander, you roll a 5, which modifies to 4: He's a popular leader!

Now take only the alignments of the popular leaders. If all popular leaders share the same alignment, theirs is also the community's prevailing alignment.

If one or more popular leaders espouse an alignment, mark its box. Now mark any box situated directly (not diagonally) in between any two of the boxes you marked during the first step. The community's prevailing alignments are more or less evenly divided between all of the boxes you've marked.

Hharandro is lawful neutral, so you color in that box. For Cleander, put a marker in the lawful evil box. There are no other boxes between them, so that's it; Rethen-Dhul divides equally between lawful evil and lawful neutral individuals. (No wonder the neutral good princess has to maintain her rule by force!)

If Hharandro were lawful good and Cleander lawful evil, you'd also mark the lawful neutral box between them, and the prevailing alignments of the city would divide equally between the three lawful alignments.

Alliances and Enmities

To keep politics straightforward and easy for players to understand, make alignment important. The further apart two leaders are on the alignment map above, the greater the hostility between them. The closer together two leaders are, the more tightly allied they'll be. Good leaders always team up to fight evil ones, and vice versa.

You might prefer more complicated and realistic political struggles, especially if you plan to feature them prominently in your campaign's continuing storyline. In that case, power centers clash with one another as naturally as water runs downhill. Alignment just adds a different color to the conflicts. A rivalry between good powers might express itself nonviolently, as they try to outmaneuver and embarrass one another. Evil powers slaughter each others' lackeys without qualm. A struggle between lawful powers keeps violence within legal bounds; chaotic powers battle each other in whatever way best suits their sense of momentary advantage. Powers of like alignment band together when necessary, but turn on each other as soon as their common foes are vanquished.

Community Descriptions

Now let's take a closer look at what PCs should expect to see when gathering information in communities of various sorts.

Visuals

In communities split between power centers, people might cluster into different neighborhoods divided by alignment tendency. The greater the variance between prevailing alignments, the more obvious this will be to the outside observer. In our example city, Rethen-Dhul, the people tend from lawful neutral to lawful evil. Because there's not much of a difference in these two alignments, you probably don't see separate neighborhoods for each group. But, in a city divided between lawful good and chaotic neutral, you might see a neighborhood of beautiful, well-tended buildings butted up against a ramshackle collection of vandalized tenements.

The alignment of a community is reflected not only in the behavior of its citizens, but in how it looks. When you describe communities, think like a Hollywood production designer with an unlimited budget for sets and digital matte paintings.

Paint a place's position on the good vs. evil axis with color description. Good places are painted in warm colors: white, gold, yellow, orange, and red. When other colors occur, they're bright. Evil colors are cold or murky: black, brown, purple, green, or blue. Use adjectives to suggest that shades have become darkened or polluted. Red becomes the crimson of fresh blood; green is not the color of nature or growth, but of fungus and bile.

Describe a place's spot on the law and chaos axis with shape. Lawful places boast orderly arrangements of buildings, which are always in good repair. Structures tend to be large and elaborately decorated. Streets are wide and straight. Every building looks like it was carefully designed for its present purpose. On the other hand, if you look at the map of a chaotic community, it looks like buildings were just plunked down in haphazard order. Roads and alleys coil around them like constricting serpents. Structures are modest, temporary-looking, and have already taken more than their fair share of punishment. Many are unfinished, as if their builders abandoned more ambitious plans midway through

construction. Others have had new wings and additions haphazardly attached to them; you can tell that their owners misjudged the space they needed. Many buildings were clearly built for one purpose but have since been adapted for another.

Behavior

To most of a community's citizens, alignment is an abstract question for philosophers and clerics, not a part of their daily lives. The vast majority of people take care of their own interests, look after their families, and occasionally help their friends. They obey the rules of the places they live and passively identify with the prevailing alignment, whatever that might be. A few eccentric types might talk about their beliefs, but even they rarely act on them. Even in times of crisis, most people do what's safest for themselves and their loved ones.

Given that, the following tendencies prove true. Whoever they might be, community members respond best to PCs who share their values—or can convincingly fake them.

In areas where the prevailing alignment is good, citizens welcome PCs with a friendly smile. They'll volunteer the information PCs seek. They'll invite the PCs in to dine with them and introduce the party to their families.

If the PCs are known as heroes, they'll have to fend off countless offers of free accommodation. When overcoming DCs for their Gather Information checks, the PCs are actually struggling to sift out the useful information from the well-meaning but irrelevant chatter they've heard in the course of their inquiries.

Lawful citizens expect outsiders to obey their sense of decorum and etiquette. By treating others with respect and obeying local customs, the PCs can make themselves seem respectable. Citizens tend to be reserved, with codes of behavior that encourage them to conceal their emotions even from friends and relatives. The DCs for Gather Information and Diplomacy checks reflect the challenge of properly presenting oneself.

Chaotic sorts tend to be outwardly emotional, and they judge people instinctively. Before winning their confidence, a PC might have to prove himself by doing something impressive, from winning an arm-wrestling contest to drinking new acquaintances under the table. Chaotic types can sniff out an agenda at a hundred paces, and the DCs for Gather Information checks reflect the difficulty of making one's inquiries seem appropriately casual and disinterested.

Citizens of evil communities believe that they should do unto others before others do unto them. To deal successfully with this type, a PC must show that the risks of trying to rob, swindle, or betray him far outweigh any possible rewards. The DCs for Gather Information checks reflect the difficulty of seeming tougher and more vengeful than anyone else around. Relationships within these communities are based on power, not trust, so power is what the PCs must project.

Predominantly neutral types see all interactions as exchanges of favors. The local creed is "You scratch my back; I'll scratch yours." The successful PC readily offers gifts and other considerations when seeking information. The openness with which adventurers should proffer rewards depends on the area's other alignment tendencies, if any. In a lawful neutral community, all offers are couched in veiled language to preserve a sense of respectability. Neutral good types dicker good-naturedly; neutral evil sorts consider it naïve to conceal one's greed.

These five strains intermingle, of course. In a lawful good community, the PC must project both decorum and virtue. Chaotic evil types respond well to passionate intimidation, while in lawful evil company, one's threats must be couched in polite terms.

Now, Go To Town

That's it for general principles. Now it's time to unleash your own creativity and create some fun towns and cities for your players to poke around in. Whether these ideas give you all the detail you need or simply provide a starting point, here's hoping that your PCs' next visit to civilized quarters is an exciting and challenging one.

The Way of the Fist

3 Prestige Classes

by Brent Phillips-Watts • illustrated by Monte Moore

Combat is a way of life. Some choose it, some have it thrust upon them, and for some it is all they have ever known. In a world where strength of arms often means the difference between life and death, some choose not to rely on steel alone. For these men and women, knowing how to fight without a weapon is as important as knowing how to fight with one. Always armed, always ready, these fighters have trained their bodies to be as deadly as any sword or bow. In the D&D game, when one thinks of unarmed combat there is a natural tendency to look to the monk class, but for many, the monk's rigid devotion to his art is too strict a way of life. Presented here are three prestige classes that offer an alternative to the monk's style of hand-to-hand combat.

The Primal Rager

Timin slipped from his hiding place and struck out with his blade at the large man who had his partner in a death grip. The blade found its mark, and he smiled as the man dropped his partner with a grunt. That smile vanished as, instead of falling to the ground dead, the enraged man spun and struck out. Timin watched in horror as a clawed hand ripped into him, and as he fell to the ground all he could think to do was shout, "You should be dead!"

Many have heard tales of the ferocious and deadly nature of barbarian tribes, and many highly trained warriors have found out too late that skill with the blade is a poor match for the animal power of these wild fighters. Yet even among these fierce people, there are those who stand out as violent and untamed. So removed from civilization are these creatures that many hesitate to even call them men. Instead they are thought to be part beast, possessed by a spirit that thrives on chaos and battle. In some barbarian tribes this is seen as a blessing, and the primal rager holds great respect. For others, the primal rager's nature is seen as a perversion, and he is feared and often driven from the tribe. This removal from the tribe, either by being set on a pedestal or by being driven out, leads to a solitary nature, and a primal rager often turns to a life of adventure as a means of finding some measure of acceptance.

The primal rager pours everything into battle. He is as skilled without a weapon as with one, and he usually prefers to attack unarmed, using his

For Your Character

These prestige classes can make for fun and formidable characters. Here are a few examples:

- The primal rager is a great choice for a gnome barbarian, even if you have your character take just one level. Using the strength of the beast ability, he can use his better than average Constitution to offset his race's penalty to Strength.
- If you're using the feats presented in the *Oriental Adventures* book, your fierce grappler will greatly benefit from feats like Earth's Embrace and Improved Grapple. Remember also that your fierce grappler can make grapple checks to hold and pin foes even when she didn't initiate the grapple, and if she has the great grappler ability (and is Medium-sized), she can hold and pin Huge creatures. With a spell or two to increase your fierce grappler's size and Strength, you might even try to pin a Gargantuan creature. Don't forget to choke-out those foes.
- The drunken master (see *Sword and Fist*) is a great prestige class to combine with the brawler. The drunken master's improvised weapons and bottle proficiency trump the improvise weapon ability of the brawler, but with the brawler's improvised weapon feats ability, your character will be a triple threat. He can use any non-exotic weapon, any improvised weapon can be employed to deadly effect, and he has increased unarmed attack damage. Plus your drunken brawler makes for a hilarious character concept.

great strength to overpower his opponents and to tear them limb from limb. He feels a close connection to the primal forces within himself and has learned to harness that power when in battle. Above all, he respects the strength of the body, even over the strength of steel.

Half-orcs and humans are the most common primal ragers, but some dwarves also choose this path if they have been cast out of their clan or otherwise find themselves removed from dwarven society. Half-elves, halflings, and gnome primal ragers are very rare, but elven primal ragers are not unheard of.

Most primal rangers are barbarians, but other characters who gain the ability to rage by multiclassing or through some other means can be primal ragers.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the primal rager prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A primal rager gains proficiency with light armor and medium armor.

Strength of the Beast (Ex): Each time the primal rager uses his rage ability, he may choose to increase the fury of his attacks by sacrificing the duration of his rage. He must make this choice before the rage begins, and it cannot be altered once made. The primal rager can choose to give up a number of rounds from the duration of his rage equal to his primal rager levels and barbarian levels combined. For each round that he gives up, he gains an additional +1 to his Strength and Constitution. The added Constitution does not extend the duration of his rage, and all bonuses granted by use of this ability expire when the rage expires.

Power Strike (Ex): At 1st level, the primal rager's unarmed attacks are more deadly than most. His unarmed strikes deal 1d4 points of damage (1d3 for Small primal ragers). This damage is still subdual unless the primal rager decides to take the -4 penalty to his attack roll.

At 3rd level, the damage a primal rager does with unarmed strikes increases to 1d6 damage (1d4 for Small primal ragers).

Quell the Rage (Ex): At 2nd level, the primal rager can hold his temper without dismissing the rage. For a number of rounds equal to his Wisdom modifier, the primal rager may quell his rage: During this time he loses his rage bonuses, but he does not suffer from fatigue. He may then choose to return to his raging state for the remainder of its duration or end the rage. Ending the rage results in fatigue as normal. The primal rager must have at least one round of rage left before he is fatigued to use this ability.

Damage Reduction (Su): Starting at 3rd level, the primal rager gains the ability to shrug off some amount of injury from weapon blows, unarmed strikes, and natural weapon attacks. Subtract 1 from the damage the primal rager takes each time he is dealt damage by such attacks. This damage reduction stacks with any damage reduction the primal rager has from levels in the barbarian class. Note that the primal rager's damage reduction allows him to penetrate the damage reduction of other creatures with his unarmed attacks as noted in the *Monster Manual.*

Rage (Ex): At 4th level, the primal rager can rage one additional time per day.

Primal Rager

Class Requirements

To qualify to become a primal rager, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Alignment: Any nonlawful.
Base Attack Bonus: +8.
Wilderness Lore: 5 ranks.
Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will.
Special: Ability to Rage 2/day.

Primal Rager

Class Skills

The primal rager's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: Ride.
Con: –
Int: Craft.
Wis: Intuit Direction, Listen, Spot, Wilderness Lore.
Cha: Handle Animal, Intimidate.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

HIT DIE D10

The Primal Rager

Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Strength of the beast, power strike 1d4
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Quell the rage
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Damage reduction 1/–, power strike 1d6
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Rage +1/day
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Heart of the beast

The Fierce Grappler

Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Precision strike
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Power strike (1d4), great grappler
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Deadly pin
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Power strike (1d6)
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Choke-out

Fierce Grappler

Class Requirements

To qualify to become a fierce grappler, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +6.
Escape Artist: 5 ranks.
Feats: Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Stunning Fist.

Fierce Grappler

Class Skills

The fierce grappler's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: Escape Artist, Tumble.
Con: –
Int: Craft.
Wis: Heal.
Cha: Intimidate.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

HIT DIE D10

Heart of the Beast (Ex): At 5th level, the primal rager's fury becomes so great that the animal within him manifests during a rage. His hands grow large claws, and his skin thickens into an animal hide. During a rage, the primal rager's damage reduction is increased by 1, and his unarmed attacks deal 1d8 points of slashing damage (1d6 for Small primal ragers). This damage is normal damage; the primal rager does not suffer a -4 penalty to hit.

The Fierce Grappler

"A halfling against a half-orc!" Aiden laughed as he looked down to the arena and the two opponents about to face each other. "That's not a good match. At least give him a weapon."

Tobar looked at his friend and nodded. "I know. That half-orc doesn't stand a chance."

Always ready for conflict, with or without a weapon, the fierce grappler is in many ways the ultimate fighter. Fierce grapplers study the way the body moves and use this knowledge to their advantage, pinpointing pressure points and using arm and leg locks to cause the most damage to their enemies. They recognize that the most effective way to overcome an opponent is to prevent him from fighting back. They use their own bodies and their knowledge of the body to tie their opponents up, rendering them unable to fight back with sword or fist. Most realize this gives them an advantage over other, less skilled fighters, and so they are eager to challenge an opponent to unarmed combat.

Fighters, rogues, and monks are all likely to become fierce grapplers, while wizards and sorcerers are unlikely to follow this path because of the need to be so close to the enemy.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the fierce grappler prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A fierce grappler gains proficiency with light armor and medium armor.

Precision Strike (Ex): The fierce grappler has become skilled at hurting her opponents while fighting unarmed. Therefore she no longer suffers the -4 penalty to her attack roll when she switches from subdual to real damage with her unarmed strikes.

Power Strike (Ex): At 2nd level, the fierce grappler's unarmed attacks are more deadly than most. Her unarmed strikes deal 1d4 points of damage (1d3 for Small fierce grapplers).

At 4th level, the damage a fierce grappler does with her unarmed strikes increases to 1d6 damage (1d4 for Small fierce grapplers).

Great Grappler (Ex): A 2nd-level fierce grappler can hold and pin creatures up to two size categories larger than she is.

Deadly Pin (Ex): The fierce grappler can damage opponents she pins with unarmed attacks. Successful grapple checks that she initiates against an opponent she has pinned cause unarmed damage.

Choke-Out (Ex): At 5th level, the fierce grappler gains the ability to render her opponent unconscious by blocking his flow of air. If the fierce grappler maintains a pin for 1 full round, at the end of the round, her opponent must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 15 + grapple damage dealt during that round by the fierce grappler). If the saving throw fails, the opponent falls unconscious for 1d3 rounds.

The Brawler

Hit him with a fist, and he smiles. Hit him with two fists, and he laughs. Hit him with a chair, and you might just get his attention.
–Tobar Axehalf, Barkeep.

In almost every city there is a bar or a tavern where the light of heart fear to tread, where the rooms are kept dim even in the middle of the day, and you are as likely to find a fight as you are food and drink. This is the home of the brawler. Raised in the streets, grown tough out of necessity, the brawler lives a life of street fights and bar brawls. He excels at fighting in a crowd and uses whatever he can to defeat those he faces. Whether it's a chair, a table leg, or a pint of ale, the brawler uses it all with deadly effect. His life has been rough, but he has grown strong from it, having learned to take a punch and keep fighting. Whether it is using his skills as a thug, a bouncer, or simply as a hired fighter, the brawler is sure to be wherever the fight is.

Humans and half-orcs are most likely to be brawlers, though many dwarves also follow this path. Fighters and rogues are often drawn into the chaotic lifestyle of the brawler, although barbarians are as likely to follow this path if they become drawn to the city life. Bards too are known to become brawlers as performing at inns and taverns often puts them in the thick of barroom brawls.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the brawler prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A fierce grappler gains proficiency with all simple and martial weapons.

Improvise Weapon (Ex): The Brawler must often make use of unconventional weapons to overcome his foes. Because of this, he has become skilled at using whatever is at hand as a weapon. At 1st

For Your Campaign

You can use these prestige classes in your campaign in a number of ways:

- Perhaps primal ragers all come from a particular tribe of barbarians that worships an animal totem. When the primal ragers use the heart of the beast ability, they take on aspects of the animal totem (growing fur, gaining cat-like eyes, and so on). Alternatively, the primal ragers could be demon cultists, taking the appearance of their demon masters when they rage.
- The fierce grapplers might all come from an organization of athletics fanatics who run games like the Olympics and favor wrestling as a sport. Alternatively, perhaps your players' characters first encounter a fierce grappler when they face one of the professional wrestlers acting as a bouncer at the inn or tavern the PCs frequent.
- A brawler can make for an entertaining villain. The consummate taproom boaster and bully, the unassuming brawler could be a surprising foe for a high-level party. Alternatively, an evil cleric brawler, controlling undead skeletons, could take advantage of his foes' propensity to use bludgeoning weapons.
- A brawler could also be a helpful NPC. Perhaps the wise and knowledgeable barkeep the PCs always consult for information lends a surprising helpful hand (and many thrown pewter steins) when the PCs are surprised by enemies at their favorite watering hole.

level, the brawler no longer suffers the standard -4 nonproficiency penalty to hit when using an improvised weapon. Objects that weigh less than 5 pounds inflict 1d4 points of damage, while items weighing more than 5 pounds inflict 1d6 points of damage. All improvised weapons threaten a critical on a roll of 20 and have a multiplier of x2. Especially long items, such as a ladder, allow the brawler to attack with reach. Usually, a brawler's improvised weapon causes bludgeoning damage, but some items, such as a skewer, might cause piercing damage. The brawler can also throw an improvised weapon; all such weapons have a range increment of 10 feet. Note that this ability does not give the Brawler proficiency with any exotic weapons.

Crowd Fighting (Ex): At 1st level, the brawler gains a +1 morale bonus to attacks when threatening three or more opponents at the same time. This bonus increases to +2 at 3rd level and to +3 at 5th level.

Improvised Weapon Feats (Ex): At 2nd level, the brawler gains the ability to choose "improvised weapon" as the selected weapon when taking feats that require a selected weapon. Thus, feats such as Weapon Focus, Weapon Specialization, and Improved Critical can have "improvised weapon" as the selected weapon. Making such a choice allows the brawler to apply that feat to any improvised weapon he uses.

Subdual Damage Reduction (Su): At 4th level, the brawler gains the ability to shrug off some amount of injury due to subdual damage. Subtract the brawler's Constitution bonus from any attack or spell that deals subdual damage. The brawler takes subdual damage from forced marches, hustling overland, and non-combat sources normally.

Bludgeoning Substitution (Su): At 5th level, half of the damage the brawler suffers from a bludgeoning attack is converted to subdual damage and is subject to the brawler's subdual damage reduction ability.

NEW FEATS

Improvised Trip Attack

You can trip foes with thrown weapons.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +3 or better, Improvised Weapon Proficiency or the brawler's improvised weapon ability.

Benefit: When using a weapon or improvised weapon, you can attempt to trip foes at range by throwing the weapon at the foe. When you attempt to do so, make a ranged touch attack with the weapon. If you hit, you and your foe make an opposed Strength check, following the normal rules for trip attempts. Your size does not count toward your Strength check.

The size of the weapon used might give you a bonus or a penalty. If the weapon is of a weapon size category equal to the creature size category of the foe you wish to trip, you suffer no penalty and gain no bonus. For each size category smaller the weapon is, you suffer a -4 penalty. For each size category larger the weapon is, you gain a +4 bonus. For instance, throwing a short sword (Small) at a halfling would give you no bonus or penalty. Throwing the same weapon at a human would cause you to suffer a -4 penalty, and throwing it at an ogre would cause you to suffer a -8 penalty.

See "Sage Advice" in this issue for more guidelines on throwing objects.

Improvised Weapon Proficiency

You are skilled at using any object as a weapon.

Benefit: You do not suffer the standard -4 nonproficiency penalty for using an improvised weapon; instead you suffer a -2 nonproficiency penalty.

Unbalancing Blow

You are skilled at unbalancing your foes.

Prerequisites: 5 ranks in Balance, Wis 13+.

Benefit: You may make a Dexterity check instead of a Strength check when attempting to trip foes.

Brawler

Class Requirements

To qualify to become a brawler, a character must fulfill all the following criteria:

Base Attack Bonus: +7.
Intimidate: 5 ranks.
Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Improved Unarmed Strike.

Brawler

Class Skills

The brawler's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are:

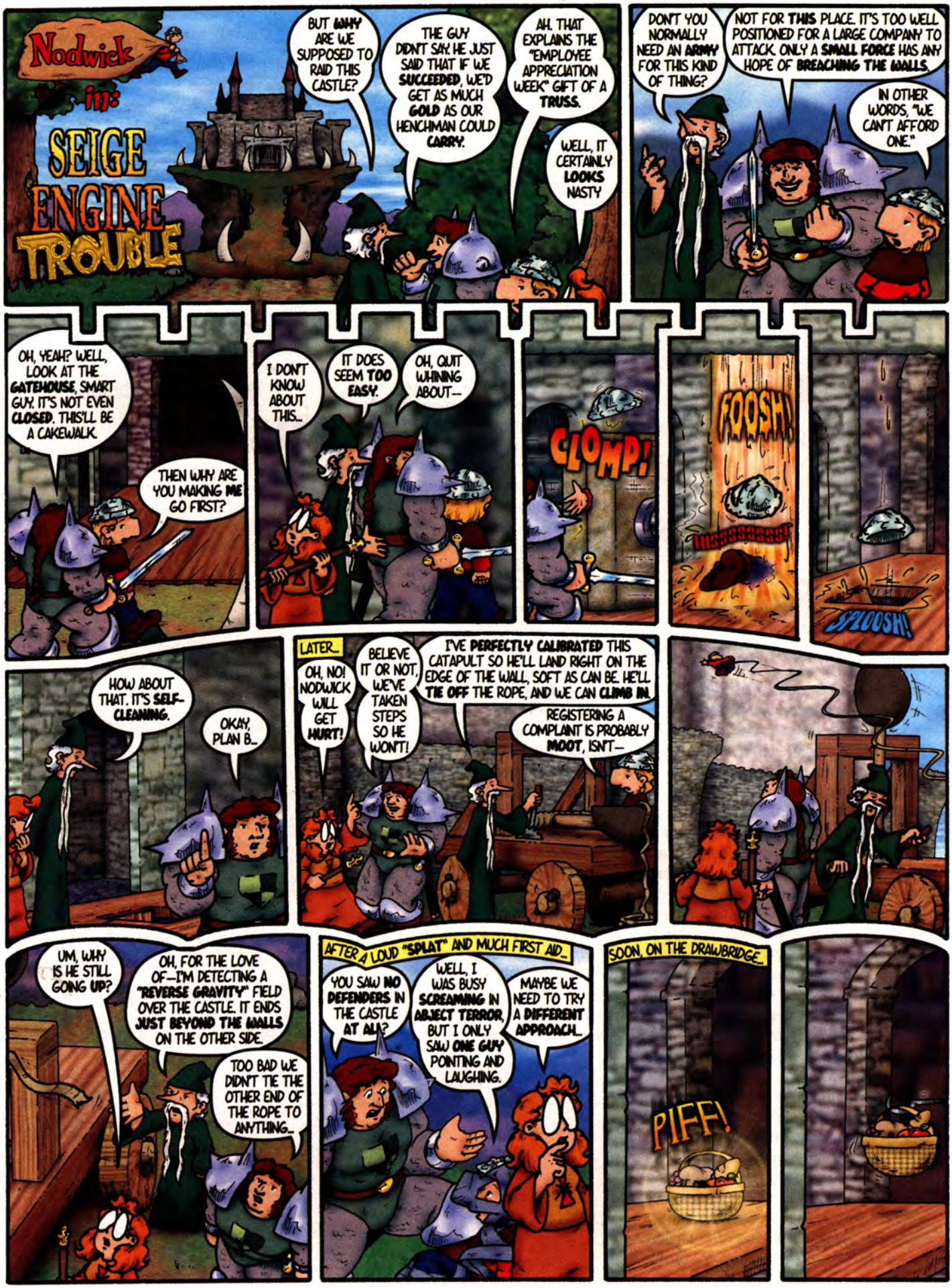
Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: Balance, Ride.
Con: —
Int: Craft.
Wis: Intuit Direction, Listen, Spot.
Cha: Bluff, Intimidate.

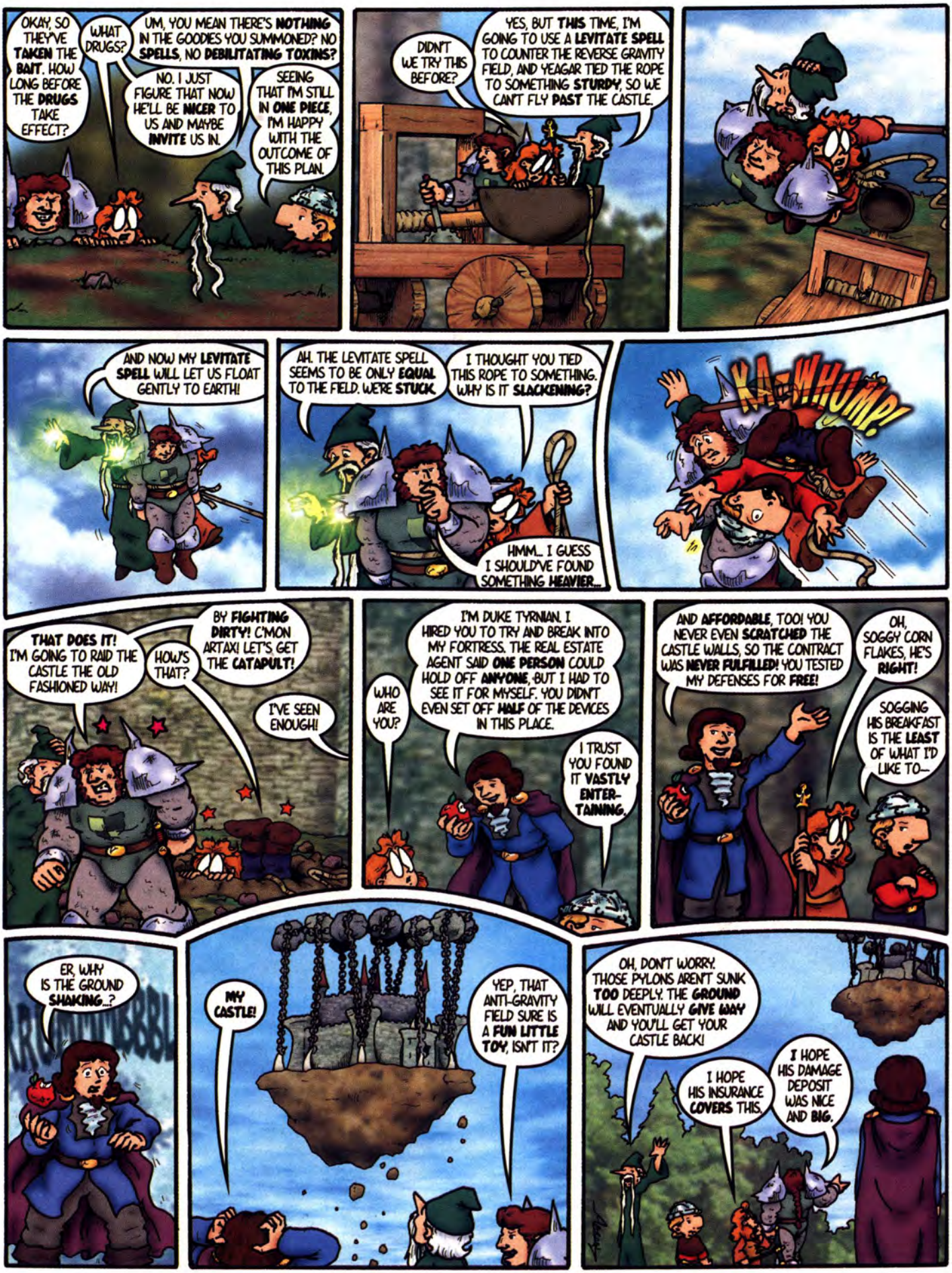
Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

HIT DIE
D10

The Brawler

Levels	Base Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	Improvise weapon, crowd fighting +1
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Improvised weapon feats
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Crowd fighting +2
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	Subdual damage reduction
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	Bludgeoning substitution, crowd fighting +3


Nodwick in: SEIGE ENGINE TROUBLE
BUT WHY ARE WE SUPPOSED TO RAID THIS CASTLE?
THE GUY DIDN'T SAY. HE JUST SAID THAT IF WE SUCCEEDED, WE'D GET AS MUCH GOLD AS OUR HENCHMAN COULD CARRY.
AH. THAT EXPLAINS THE "EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION WEEK" GIFT OF A TRUSS.
WELL, IT CERTAINLY LOOKS NASTY
DON'T YOU NORMALLY NEED AN ARMY FOR THIS KIND OF THING?
NOT FOR THIS PLACE. IT'S TOO WELL POSITIONED FOR A LARGE COMPANY TO ATTACK. ONLY A SMALL FORCE HAS ANY HOPE OF BREACHING THE WALLS.
IN OTHER WORDS, "WE CAN'T AFFORD ONE."
OH, YEAH? WELL, LOOK AT THE GATEHOUSE, SMART GUY. IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSED. THIS'LL BE A CAKEWALK.
THEN WHY ARE YOU MAKING ME GO FIRST?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS...
IT DOES SEEM TOO EASY.
OH, QUIT WHINING ABOUT--
CLOMP!
FOOSH!
HISSSSSSS!
SPLOOSH!
HOW ABOUT THAT. IT'S SELF-CLEANING.
OKAY, PLAN B...
LATER...
OH, NO! NODWICK WILL GET HURT!
BELIEVE IT OR NOT, WE'VE TAKEN STEPS SO HE WON'T!
I'VE PERFECTLY CALIBRATED THIS CATAPULT SO HE'LL LAND RIGHT ON THE EDGE OF THE WALL, SOFT AS CAN BE. HE'LL TIE OFF THE ROPE, AND WE CAN CLIMB IN.
REGISTERING A COMPLAINT IS PROBABLY MOOT, ISN'T--
UM, WHY IS HE STILL GOING UP?
OH, FOR THE LOVE OF--I'M DETECTING A "REVERSE GRAVITY" FIELD OVER THE CASTLE. IT ENDS JUST BEYOND THE WALLS ON THE OTHER SIDE.
TOO BAD WE DIDN'T TIE THE OTHER END OF THE ROPE TO ANYTHING...
AFTER A LOUD "SPLAT" AND MUCH FIRST AID...
YOU SAW NO DEFENDERS IN THE CASTLE AT ALL?
WELL, I WAS BUSY SCREAMING IN ABJECT TERROR, BUT I ONLY SAW ONE GUY POINTING AND LAUGHING.
MAYBE WE NEED TO TRY A DIFFERENT APPROACH...
SOON, ON THE DRAWBRIDGE...
PIFF!


OKAY, SO THEY'VE **TAKEN** THE **BAIT**. HOW LONG BEFORE THE **DRUGS** TAKE EFFECT?
WHAT DRUGS?
UM, YOU MEAN THERE'S **NOTHING** IN THE GOODIES YOU SUMMONED? NO **SPELLS**, NO **DEBILITATING TOXINS?**
NO. I JUST FIGURE THAT NOW HE'LL BE **NICER** TO US AND MAYBE **INVITE** US IN.
SEEING THAT I'M STILL IN **ONE PIECE**, I'M HAPPY WITH THE OUTCOME OF THIS PLAN.
DIDN'T WE TRY THIS BEFORE?
YES, BUT **THIS** TIME, I'M GOING TO USE A **LEVITATE SPELL** TO COUNTER THE REVERSE GRAVITY FIELD, AND YEAGAR TIED THE ROPE TO SOMETHING **STURDY**, SO WE CAN'T FLY **PAST** THE CASTLE.
AND NOW MY **LEVITATE SPELL** WILL LET US FLOAT GENTLY TO EARTH!
AH. THE LEVITATE SPELL SEEMS TO BE ONLY **EQUAL** TO THE FIELD. WE'RE **STUCK**.
I THOUGHT YOU TIED THIS ROPE TO SOMETHING. WHY IS IT **SLACKENING?**
HMM... I GUESS I SHOULD'VE FOUND SOMETHING **HEAVIER**...
KA-WHUMP!
THAT DOES IT! I'M GOING TO RAID THE CASTLE THE OLD FASHIONED WAY!
HOW'S THAT?
BY **FIGHTING DIRTY!** C'MON ARTAX! LET'S GET THE **CATAPULT!**
I'VE SEEN ENOUGH!
WHO ARE YOU?
I'M DUKE TYRNIAN. I HIRED YOU TO TRY AND BREAK INTO MY FORTRESS. THE REAL ESTATE AGENT SAID **ONE PERSON** COULD HOLD OFF **ANYONE**, BUT I HAD TO SEE IT FOR MYSELF. YOU DIDN'T EVEN SET OFF **HALF** OF THE DEVICES IN THIS PLACE.
I TRUST YOU FOUND IT **VASTLY ENTER-TAINING.**
AND **AFFORDABLE**, TOO! YOU NEVER EVEN **SCRATCHED** THE CASTLE WALLS, SO THE CONTRACT WAS **NEVER FULFILLED!** YOU TESTED MY DEFENSES FOR **FREE!**
OH, SOGGY CORN FLAKES, HE'S **RIGHT!**
SOGGING HIS BREAKFAST IS THE **LEAST** OF WHAT I'D LIKE TO—
ER, WHY IS THE GROUND **SHAKING...?**
ARUMMMBBBL
MY CASTLE!
YEP, THAT ANTI-GRAVITY FIELD SURE IS A **FUN LITTLE TOY**, ISN'T IT?
OH, DON'T WORRY. THOSE PYLONS AREN'T SUNK **TOO** DEEPLY. THE **GROUND** WILL EVENTUALLY **GIVE WAY** AND YOU'LL GET YOUR CASTLE BACK!
I HOPE HIS INSURANCE **COVERS** THIS.
I HOPE HIS DAMAGE DEPOSIT WAS NICE AND **BIG.**

Class Acts:

The Master Siege Engineer

by Andy Collins

As long as there is war, the master siege engineer will have a place in society. In small battles, the master siege engineer operates a ballista himself, but in larger struggles, he commands several teams of siege weapon operators.

Most master siege engineers are drawn from the ranks of fighters, experts, or warriors. Occasionally, a paladin or cleric dedicated to a god of war might train as a master siege engineer, but such characters are rare. Barbarians, monks, and rangers find the life of a master siege engineer unappealing, and few spellcasters are interested in its rewards.

Master siege engineers generally receive their training from military academies and often find employment with military forces. Those who leave formal service often become mercenaries, hiring themselves out to the highest bidder.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master siege engineer prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A master siege engineer gains no weapon or armor proficiency.

Siege Accuracy (Ex): As a result of his specialized training, a master siege engineer is highly accurate when firing siege weapons. When firing a siege weapon such as a catapult, a master siege engineer makes a Profession (siege engineer) check (DC 20) as normal. Success, however, indicates that the master siege engineer consults the Deviation Diagram (6 feet to 10 feet) on page 68 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

At 4th level, the master siege engineer's skills are so finely tuned that he rarely misses his target when firing a siege weapon and uses the Deviation Diagram (1 feet to 5 feet) after making a successful Profession (siege engineer) check.

Increased Range (Ex): When operating a siege weapon, the master siege engineer may add 10% to the weapon's range increment. This has no effect on the weapon's minimum range (such as for catapults).

Siege Weapon Specialization (Ex): At 2nd level, a master siege engineer selects a specific siege engine (such as a heavy catapult, light catapult, ballista, or ram). Whenever the master siege engineer operates that type of siege weapon, he adds an additional 1d6 to the damage it inflicts.

Siege Guidance (Ex): At 3rd level, the master siege engineer can spend a standard action to guide nearby siege teams. This grants a +2 morale bonus to all Profession (siege engineer) checks made by any allied siege weapon operators within 100 feet (and within sight) of the master siege engineer. This is a language-dependent ability.

Command Siege (Ex): At 5th level, the master siege engineer can oversee other troops conducting a siege. By spending a standard action, he can extend his siege accuracy to a number of siege weapon teams equal to his master siege engineer class level plus his Charisma bonus. Siege weapon teams are groups of characters who are responsible for operating and firing a siege weapon. All commanded siege weapon teams must be within 120 feet (and within sight) of the master siege engineer for this ability to have an effect. This is a language-dependent ability. D

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a master siege engineer, the character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Feats: Skill Focus (Profession) (siege engineer).
Craft (siege weaponry): 4 ranks.
Knowledge (architecture and engineering): 4 ranks.
Profession (siege engineer): 8 ranks.
Spot: 4 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

The master siege engineer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are as follows:

Str: Climb, Jump, Swim.
Dex: —
Con: —
Int: Craft, Disable Device, Knowledge (architecture and engineering)
Wis: Profession, Spot, Use Rope
Cha: Handle Animal

Skill Points at Each Additional Level: 4 + Int modifier.

HIT DIE: D10

THE MASTER SIEGE ENGINEER

Level	Attack Bonus	Fort. Save	Ref. Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Siege accuracy, increased range
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Siege weapon specialization
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Siege guidance
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Siege accuracy (improved)
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Command siege

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The Bone Dance

by Ed Greenwood · Illustrated by David Day

In the Border Forest not far north of Dagger Falls stands a haunted hill avoided by local hunters. Its snarling ghosts are said to slay hunters with savage glee.

The Bone Dance is said to be haunted not by human dead, but by monsters who perished in the region. Their skeletons have often been seen dancing around its bare, rocky height at night, shrouded in strange glows that make them visible from afar. If living creatures venture too near, even by day, the skeletons give chase, ripping into those they catch with their bony claws.

As a result, few trap or hunt near the Bone Dance, and small game is plentiful in those trail-laced trees.

The Brave Blade

Although folk of Daggerdale and the Tesh valley shun the Bone Dance, they seem fascinated by it; unlike the local horrors that go unmentioned elsewhere in Faerûn, locals seem proud of the haunting in their midst and readily share descriptions of particularly scary monsters such as ghostly dragons coiling restlessly in the air above the Bone Dance's bare summit.

Any traveler who asks about such apparitions is sure to be told of the grisly fate of the Brave Blade. Around twenty-four autumns ago, this band of proud young adventurers out of Yhaunn (reckless fools in the eyes of most locals) were hired by a now-dead furrier, Lhastal Darramooth of Daggerdale, to end the haunting of the Bone Dance.

Although the tale has grown in the telling and is full of many obvious embellishments, the most chilling part of this local fireside shiver-tale is that its central narrative is utter truth. The Brave Blade was hired, set forth amid much laughter, set upon that same night, hunted down, and torn apart. The haunts left some of the band members' bloody limbs on Darramooth's doorstep for the furrier to find, and they left a bloody trail of death back into the woods that many local folk saw and recall all too vividly. No heads of the dead adventurers were seen that day, but their skulls still turn up from time to time—always perched on rocks beside trails or in other prominent places—as warnings to stay well away from the Bone Dance.

The Bone Dance

The infamous haunted hill is surrounded by thick stands of trees, but the top is largely bare. Those who've dared to venture near one of the many game trails (a dozen or more such trails climb the hill, presumably converging at its top—a strange route for game to habitually take) say that the Bone Dance looks odd—like stones dropped and shaped by a god, as one put it—and not something that should be there at all.

Such impressions are rooted in the shape and composition of the hill. Its flanks are of boulder-studded gravel scree and dirt, to which a few low shrubs and creepers cling. The hill is dome shaped, but its top is of jagged rocks, with a roughly circular hollow at the center.

This hollow is perhaps forty to fifty feet across and twenty feet deep at most. At its center stands a stone table: a huge, roughly rectangular slab set atop two flat-topped boulders. The slab has been darkened by many overlapping bloodstains.

The few locals bold enough to actually peer into the hollow have all concluded that they were looking at an altar of some sort, and fireside tales all agree on this—although they vary widely in their claims as to what faith the altar belongs to and precisely what—beyond sacrifices—it is used for.

Many cling to the idea that the ghostly monsters rend and then devour living creatures atop the Bone Dance in a ritual that involves dancing or capering around the altar. Some ascribe this to a perverted worship of Malar, others to one of the Beast Cults, and a rare few to various deities of death, the dead, or even a divine Bone Lord venerated by undead monsters; it has been said that for every tankard of ale one purchases in a Daggerdale tavern, one can hear a different tale of what happens atop the Bone Dance.

Beneath the stone table, the truly bold find many skulls, tusks, fangs, jawbones, claws, and the like—all carefully placed well away from the edges to keep them from weather or incautious feet.

The Snarling Hunt

Elminster was able to take us beyond local rumor and shiver-tale embellishments and lay bare the truth about the Bone Dance. The great mage reported that the apparitions of dancing monster skeletons are just that: spell-spun illusions. Even close up, they're menacing and impressive, and they often stare down from the hill into the surrounding forest. They move in silence, and they have no feet, their legs fading from view at the ankles. They dance over, through, and above the jagged hill-top rocks as if such obstructions don't exist.

The most often seen ghosts of the Bone Dance are phantoms of giants (often sporting multiple heads or arms), chimeras, hydras, wyverns, and trolls of gigantic size. Behirs, dragons, retriever tanar'ri, and even illithids are also often seen. From time to time their hides or living bodies seem to

appear and briefly cloak their bones, or they ride their skeletons as shadows or mists before fading away again.

The apparitions sometimes make bestial sounds. Often these are strange hootings, ground-shaking roars (called "longthunder" by many folk of Daggerdale, who can hear this particular sound at a great distance), or wolf-howls, rather than the calls or sounds normally made by the creatures the phantoms resemble.

When they detect intruders venturing too close to the hill, the monsters give cry, lower their heads, and rush down the hill to give chase. As they pursue, they all make extremely loud, menacing snarling noises, and they often overrun fleeing creatures.

Interestingly, no beast ghost has ever actually slain anyone. Harm is done by spells that appear to be physical attacks made by the phantoms, and directly by beast-headed humans who pounce from hiding, employing weapons such as bear-claw-studded clubs, claw-like bladed gauntlets, and the like.

These ambushing attackers are worshipers of Malar wearing beast-masks and the pelts of forest creatures. The dancing ghosts are a fraud they maintain to keep the faithless away from the Place of Offering, their sacred site.

Fangfalls

Many of the largest and most obvious trails close to the Bone Dance are lures for intruders and prowling predators. They are kept clear of fallen trees by the Malarites, but the growth of shrubbery and undergrowth is encouraged to better conceal pit traps.

The cultists call these traps "fangfalls" for two reasons: Pointed wooden stakes line each pit, and the Malar cultists place aggressive, poisonous snakes in the pits to attack victims.

Elminster's Notes

Every tribe of the People has its own rites, but non-believers need only remember two things: hunts and sacrifices. Malarites like to spill blood in the name of Malar, both on altars and in the chase, and blood-lust is their preferred state. Some might approach prey stealthily and with cunning, but the chase is what fires their blood, and most will wound to spill blood as they pursue, trying not to fell a fleeing creature before they must.

A typical fangfall is about 20 feet deep, with a cover of interlaced tree boughs covered with vines, a light coating of earth, dead leaves, and growing plants and fungi. Fangfall stakes are usually fastened together into a one-piece frame and lowered into a fangfall by use of a rope, which is left in place (concealed, of course) for hauling the frame out again later for repairs and easy removal of bodies and captured items.

Fangfalls are clustered heavily in two spots of note: in a cleared area at the base of the Bone Dance known as "the Throat" (an obvious assembly area for groups of intruders to gather and plan an assault on the hill) and around a false altar (crude stone table) where the Malarites often leave the bodies of intruders they've slain—to lure would-be rescuers or avengers to their dooms.

The Rauthtor

The Bone Dance is the central worshiping-place of the tribe of the People of the Black Blood that inhabits the southernmost Border Forest (other Malarites dwell in its northernmost two-thirds). This tribe of Malar worshipers calls itself the Rauthtor, and it consists of folk who live wild in the forest itself, foresters, and subsistence farmers from the Tesh valley.

The name of the tribe comes from a long-dead brute of a man named Rauthtor, a crazed farmer who lost his family to raiding orcs. Rauthtor, gifted with unusual strength, did not rest until he'd hunted down all of those orcs and personally slain them. He lived the life of a prowling hunter in the Border Forest thereafter, seldom emerging save to sell owlbear pelts when he needed new supplies and blades.

Rauthtor hunted monsters, game for food, and those who crossed him with the same cunning and fearlessness, and although he probably never venerated Malar, he inspired some Malar worshipers who fled Zhentil Keep when Manshoon came to power and that city fell ever more firmly into the grip of Bane.

They founded a tribe of the People of the Black Blood in the Tesh valley, retreating north into the Border Forest in response to hostile treatment from Teshen farmers. The band stayed in the trees to avoid foraging bands of orc mercenaries employed by the Zhents.

Members of the Rauthtor make several beast-masks for themselves. They typically conceal these masks in coffers or old helms lightly buried or perched inside hollow trees well away from their dwellings to avoid discovery. These are typically shaped with some skill (senior members of the tribe aid the stumble-thumbed) and always have fur, ears, fangs, and the like attached, so wearers look like they have the heads of wolves, bears, or other forest beasts grafted onto their own.

Such masks must be worn for rituals, when hunting or fighting for the tribe, and during sentinel duty. Duties of the Rauthtor include participation in rituals (including the usual High Hunts celebrated by all Malar cultists), defending the Bone Dance against intrusion (both by active fighting and keeping watch over the Bone Dance as sentinels, a duty typically performed when lying concealed on high tree branches), maintaining its fangfalls and trails, and capturing snakes for use in the pit traps.

The bones kept beneath the altar are holy regalia, to be dipped in the blood of sacrifices and brandished during prayer-dances around the altar such as the Blood Chant.

In Your Campaign

Although the names mentioned in the column all apply to the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign, transporting the ideas and elements into a different campaign is relatively easy.

A haunted forest is a location ripe for adventure, and getting the PCs interested is as easy as giving them a connection to an individual or group such as the Brave Blade that has fallen in the region.

Although not every campaign has a god of the hunt like Malar of the FORGOTTEN REALMS, other evil deities serve just as well as patrons of the clever cult.

The beast cult is a popular idea in movies and fiction, and including a strange cult without a particular god is quite feasible.

Adapting the cultists who plague the area around the Bone Dance to your campaign might be as easy as assigning them a motivation. The cultists could be in the area because they were driven from a previous stronghold, much like their conflict with the Zhents in this article. They could also be searching for some powerful artifact important to their patron, attempting to finish some great ritual, or waiting for the arrival of a new prophet promised by their god.

The Bone Dance

In game terms, a typical fangfall is a 20-foot deep spiked pit trap. Rules for traps can be found in both the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Song and Silence*.

Spiked Pit Trap: CR 3; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Reflex save (DC 20) avoids; 20 ft. deep (2d6, fall); multiple targets (first target in two adjacent 5-ft. squares); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 each); Search (DC 21); Disable Device (DC 20).

Creatures in the pit can make a Search check (DC 20) to find the ropes hidden along the pit's well.

The snakes all have the same statistics as a Small viper.

Snake, Small Viper: hp 4, see *Monster Manual* page 202.

Rauthtor cache beneath rocks: These stashes hold weapons, coins, and valuables.

AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN . . .

New Siege Weapons and Ammunition

by Eric Cagle · Illustrated by Rob Hinds

One of the biggest problems with building a fortress is that someone inevitably comes along and tries to take it from you. While there are only so many ways to defend your precious property, there is a nearly infinite variety of methods to reduce a fortification to rubble. When the tide of war washes up against your gate, use the items in this article to inflict some property damage on that castle next door.

Catapult and Trebuchet Ammunition

Catapults and trebuchet can be loaded with many different kinds of ammunition. Stones, burning pitch, and dead animals can be destructive and deadly, but the following types of ammunition give these siege weapons an extra advantage. All the types of magic ammunition described in this article are single-use items.

Burning Metal Stone and Freezing Metal Stone

Despite being called stones, these two types of catapult rounds are actually made out of metal. The *burning metal stone* is quite warm to the touch, while the *freezing metal stone* is icy cold. (They are not hot or cold enough to deal damage when handled, however.) Upon impact, the stone damages what it hits as normal and then releases a *heat metal* or *chill metal* spell (depending on what type of stone was used) in a 15-foot-radius spread. Any creature carrying metal is affected by the spell unless a successful Will saving throw (DC 13) or spell resistance negates the effect.

Caster Level: 10th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heat metal* or *chill metal;* **Market Price:** 1,010 gp; **Cost to Create:** 510 gp + 40 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Defoliant Stone

This ammunition does the opposite of the *wall stones;* it removes cover for a clear line of sight on attackers and opens a pathway through obstructing brush for an assault.

Each *defoliant stone* looks like a ball of stone carved to look like a mass of twisting vines. When fired from a catapult or trebuchet, the stone damages what it hits as normal, and then all normal vegetation (non-magical, non-sentient grasses, briars, bushes, trees, and so on) within a 100-foot radius of the stone shrink to one-third their normal size, becoming untangled and less bushy.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *diminish plants;* **Market Price:** 760 gp; **Cost to Create:** 385 gp + 30 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Earthquake Stone

This catapult stone is heavily fractured and cracked, but despite any rough handling, it does not fall apart. When fired from a catapult or trebuchet, the stone damages what it hits as normal and then unleashes a powerful *earthquake,* as the spell cast by a 15th-level cleric, in a 75-foot radius.

Caster Level: 15th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *earthquake;* **Market Price:** 12,010 gp; **Cost to Create:** 6,010 gp + 480 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Quenching Stone

Fire is one of the deadliest adversaries on the battlefield, and being able to defend troops and equipment from this threat is important to any general. This ammunition is used on friendly troops as often as on hostile, fire-based enemies.

When this catapult stone hits, it deals no damage and instead bursts into water, releasing a *quench* spell as though cast by a 7th-level druid. The quenching effect affects a 30-foot-radius burst rather than the normal cubic dimensions.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *quench;* **Market Price:** 2,810 gp; **Cost to Create:** 1,410 gp + 112 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Softening Stone

Created by dwarven wizards for siege engineers, this ammunition is used to weaken walls and other objects. When fired from a catapult or trebuchet, it strikes and deals damage normally but treats the hardness of any object it strikes as half normal.

Caster Level: 3rd; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *soften earth and stone;* **Market Price:** 460 gp; **Cost to Create:** 235 gp + 18 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Wall Stone

Many troops in an army assaulting a castle are lost before they reach the walls of the fortress. Arrows, crossbow bolts, and worse rain down on them while they cross what is known as "the killing field." In an effort to provide cover for advancing troops, magically inclined siege engineers have created ammunition that creates a wall when it strikes the ground.

Each *wall stone* looks like a ball of bricks that have been mortared together. When fired from a catapult or trebuchet, the stone damages what it hits as normal and then creates a magic wall; this wall always arises perpendicular to the trajectory at which the stone was fired. A *wall stone* can only be used once. There are several types of *wall stones,* although all can be used to attack a stronghold, many are used by defenders to slow or redirect enemy assaults.

Fire Wall Stone: When this stone lands, a *wall of fire* (as per the spell) 140 feet long and 20 feet high appears, spreading out equally in both directions. The hot side of the wall always faces away from the siege engine that fired the *wall stone.* The *wall of fire* dissipates in 7 rounds, so it's an excellent weapon to disrupt the charge of a sallying force before counter charging.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of fire;* **Market Price:** 2,810 gp; **Cost to Create:** 1,410 gp + 112 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Force Wall Stone: This *wall stone* creates an invisible *wall of force* (as per the spell) 90 feet long and 10 feet high. The *wall of force* lasts for 9 minutes. This wall always arises in such a way that the least number of creatures or objects block it, and it extends to its full length unless blocked.

For example, if a *force wall stone* lands next to a creature, the *wall of force* springs up and travels away from the creature, perpendicular to the trajectory of the shot, until it meets another creature, an intervening object, or its full 90-foot limit. If uninhibited by creatures or objects, the *wall of force* spreads out 45 feet in both directions from the stone's landing point perpendicular to its trajectory.

This *wall stone* has been used many times to bait foes into charging weak positions. When the enemy runs into the invisible wall, other forces move around the wall to flank and destroy the charging unit that has been thrown into chaos.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of force;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Ice Wall Stone: The *wall of ice* (as per the spell) created by this *wall stone* functions in a similar manner to the

For Your Character

When creating or buying items for your character, consider buying some of the items presented in this article. Of course, a *wind wall stone* will probably be useless, but perhaps you could find a use for a *+1 wind wall arrow* or a *+2 burning metal sling bullet.* Coming up with the price for such an item might seem daunting at first, but a little effort goes a long way.

When you make magic ammunition for your weapon, it must first have at least a +1 enhancement. The costs for weapon enhancements in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* assume you are making a melee weapon, ranged weapon, or 50 pieces of ammunition. To figure out the cost for one arrow, bolt, or sling stone, divide the costs on table 8-10 and 8-14 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* by 50. Then use the formula below to figure out the cost for the spell you want the ammunition to cast when it hits.

Spell Level x Caster Level x spell effect cost* (single use, use-activated; see below) = the spell's value

*If the spell being placed on the ammunition is 3rd level or lower, then the spell effect cost is 50 gp. If the spell being placed on the ammunition is 4th level or higher, then the spell effect cost is 100 gp. If casting the spell has an XP cost or expensive material component, consult Chapter 8: Magic Items in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for further guidelines.

Note which cost is higher—the weapon enhancement or the single-use spell ability. Double the cost of the lower of the two and add it to the other cost; this is the final market price of the item.

The tables below do some of the math for you, showing the cost for single pieces of magic ammunition and for single-use spell effects of various levels. Spells that target one creature are the easiest to adjudicate (if they require a ranged touch attack, your ranged attack to successfully hit the target suffices), but use the examples in this article to help you figure out how other spells might work.

Magic Ammunition Prices

Enhancement Bonus	Market Price
+1	47 gp
+2	167 gp
+3	367 gp
+4	647 gp
+5	1,007 gp
+6**	1,447 gp
+7**	1,967 gp
+8**	2,567 gp
+9**	3,247 gp
+10**	4,007 gp

Single-Use Spell Effect Prices

Spell Level	Spell	Saving Throw DC	Caster Level	Market Price
1	*inflict light wounds*	11	1st	50 gp
2	*Melf's acid arrow*	13	3rd	300 gp
3	*hold person*	14	5th	750 gp
4	*contagion*	16	7th	2,800 gp
5	*feeblemind*	17	9th	4,500 gp
6	*flesh to stone*	19	11th	6,600 gp
7	*destruction*	20	13th	9,100 gp
8	*fire storm*	22	15th	12,000 gp
9	*energy drain*	23	17th	15,300 gp

**A weapon can't actually have an enhancement bonus this high. Use these lines when special abilities are added in.

force wall stone, always appearing in such a way that the least number of creatures or objects block it and extending to its full length unless blocked. It forms a *wall of ice* (as per the spell) 7 inches thick, 10 feet tall, and 70 feet long. The *wall of ice* effects last 7 minutes.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of ice;* **Market Price:** 2,810 gp; **Cost to Create:** 1,410 gp + 112 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Iron Wall Stone: The *wall of iron* (as per the spell) created by this *wall stone* functions in a similar manner to the *force wall stone,* always appearing in such a way that the least number of creatures or objects block it and extending to its full length unless blocked. Unlike a *force wall stone,* the *wall of iron* created by this *wall stone* inserts itself into surrounding nonliving material if the material's area is sufficient to do so (see the *wall of iron* spell description). It forms a *wall of iron* 1 inch thick, 10 feet tall, and 90 feet long.

This *wall stone* creates a permanent feature on the battlefield, allowing siege engineers to make a permanent bunker for troops to hide behind.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of iron;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Rock Wall Stone: The *wall of stone* created by this *wall stone* functions in a similar manner to the *iron wall stone,* always appearing in such a way that the least number of creatures or objects block it, extending to its full length unless blocked, and inserting itself into surrounding nonliving material if the material's area is sufficient to do so (see the *wall of stone* spell description). It forms a *wall of stone* 1 inch thick, 10 feet tall, and 90 feet long, but unlike other walls created by the *wall stones,* the stone wall also has arrow loops in 5-foot intervals along the base of the wall. These arrow loops face away from the *wall stone*'s point of origin, allowing troops that move up to the base of the wall to fire projectiles through at foes.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of stone;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Thorn Wall Stone: When this stone lands, a *wall of thorns* (as per the spell) 90 feet long, 20 feet high, and 5 feet thick appears, spreading out equally in both directions. The *wall of thorns* dissipates in 90 minutes, so it's an excellent way to block line of site and missile fire by foes while siege towers are brought up to a fortress's walls.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of thorns;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Wind Wall Stone: When this stone lands, a *wind wall* (as per the spell) 50 feet long, 25 feet high, and 2 feet thick appears, spreading out equally in both directions. The *wind wall* dissipates quickly, so it's mainly used to cover the retreat of a beleaguered unit or stymie a group of archers on a wall.

Caster Level: 5th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wind wall;* **Market Price:** 760 gp; **Cost to Create:** 385 gp + 30 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Ballista Ammunition

Ballista ammunition is useful for precise effects and when accuracy is of key importance to a commander.

Chain Launching Ballista Bolt

This specialized ballista bolt is used to create a climbing chain for assaulting

monsters. When launched, this bolt trails a length of weightless, intangible chain for the entire distance of its flight. If the bolt does enough damage to overcome the hardness of an inanimate object, it joins itself with the object, and the thick steel chain trailing behind it becomes solid and real. As long as the surface is sturdy enough (like masonry, stone, or wood), the bolt and chain can support up to 10 tons before breaking (hardness 10, 60 hit points, break DC 30). Other surfaces, such as loose dirt, support less weight (DM's discretion). The chain lasts for 9 hours before evaporating into nothingness.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *major creation;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 9 lb.

Disjunction Ballista Bolt

This ballista bolt is specially designed to dispel the magic augmentations on an area of fortress wall or a unit of heavily enspelled troops. When fired from a ballista, the bolt damages what it hits as normal and then dispels all magic in a 30-foot radius as per the spell *Mordenkainen's disjunction* cast by a 17th-level caster.

Caster Level: 17th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *Mordenkainen's disjunction;* **Market Price:** 15,310 gp; **Cost to Create:** 7,660 gp + 612 XP; **Weight:** 9 lb.

Needlespike Ballista Bolt

This deadly ballista bolt is designed to take out large amounts of infantry. At a distance of 10 feet before striking a target, this metal ballista bolt shatters into hundreds of razor-sharp needles, creating a cone of needles 30 feet long, dealing 9d6 points of piercing damage to any creature caught in the area (Reflex save for half, DC 17).

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blade barrier;* **Market Price:** 4,510 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 9 lb.

Reverse Gravity Ballista Bolt

This magic bolt is used to incapacitate particularly powerful melee units or to lift foes out from behind cover. On impact, this ballista bolt deals damage as normal, and then everything within a 10-foot radius falls upward 20 feet and hovers there (per the *reverse gravity* spell cast by a 14th-level caster) for 14 rounds before falling to the ground (and suffering normal falling damage).

Caster Level: 14th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *reverse gravity;* **Market Price:** 9,810 gp; **Cost to Create:** 4,910 gp + 392 XP; **Weight:** 9 lb.

Magic War Weapons

Heroes carry magic weapons to the battlefield and so too do great armies.

Bellows of Blasting

This specialized siege engine resembles a Large bellows, mounted on a wheeled cart. The bellows can be pumped with a successful Strength check (DC 18), and it releases a blast hurricane force wind in a 200-foot-long cone for 3 rounds.

All flames in this area are extinguished. Ranged attacks are impossible (except for siege weapons, which have a -8 penalty to attack). Listen checks are impossible: All that creatures hear is the roar of the wind.

Medium-size or smaller creatures and objects are blown away 1d4x10 feet (Fortitude save to resist, DC 20), sustaining 1d4 points of subdual damage per 10 feet and landing prone. Flying creatures of Medium-size or smaller are blown away, tumbling through the air 2d6x10 feet (Fortitude save to resist, DC 20) and sustaining 2d6 points of subdual damage. Large creatures are knocked prone, and Large flying creatures are blown away 1d6x10 feet. Huge creatures are unable to move toward the bellows, and Huge flying creatures are blown away 1d6x5 feet. Larger creatures are not affected.

Caster Level: 18th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *control winds;* **Market Price:** 180,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 90,000 gp + 7,200 XP; **Weight:** 600 lb.

Fist of Grummsh

First used by orcs of the Bloody Hand tribe, this *+4 ram* has battered down the gates of countless fortresses. The *fist of Grummsh* is named for a huge, cruel-looking iron fist that caps its thick metal shaft. Any orc wielding the ram is

For Your Campaign

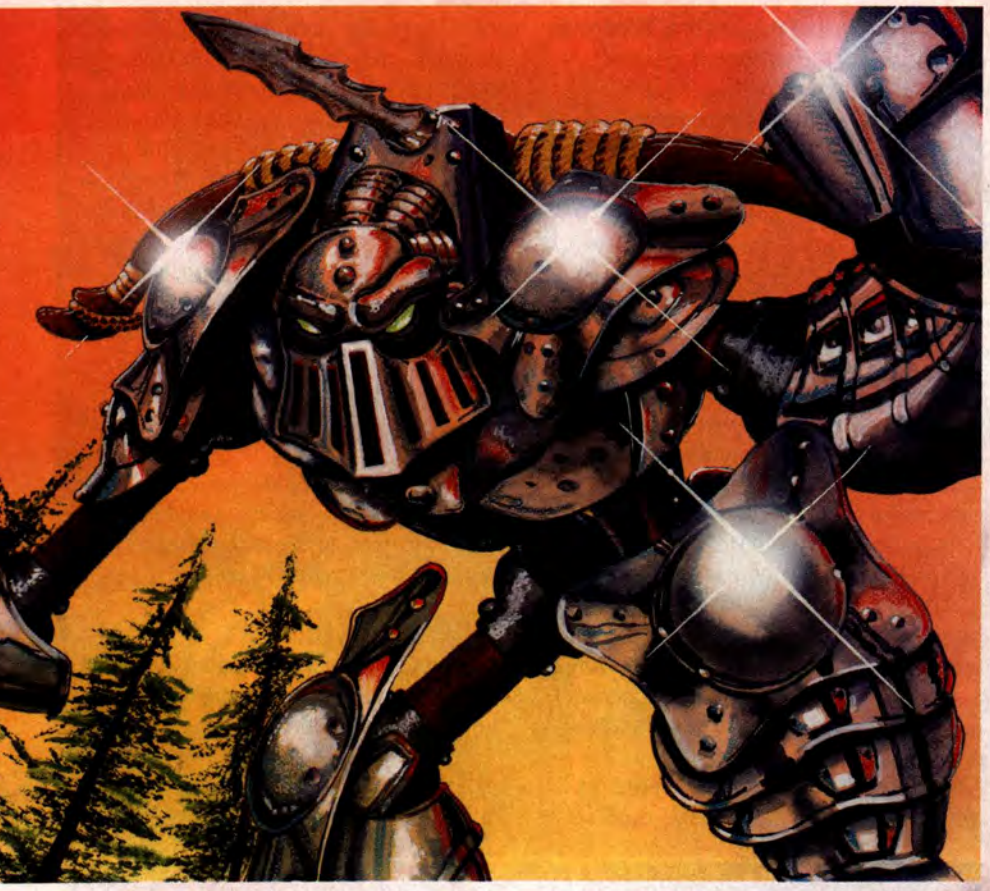
Creating new types of magic ammunition for siege weapons is relatively easy. To determine the market value of magical siege ammunition, use the formulas found in the Creating Magic Items section, Chapter 8: Magic Items, in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and those found in *Tome and Blood* to determine the price. The formula is:

Spell Level x Caster Level x spell effect cost* (single use, use-activated; see below) + 10 gp = total gp market value

*If the spell being placed on the ammunition is 3rd level or lower, then the spell effect cost is 50 gp. If the spell being placed on the ammunition is 4th level or higher, then the spell effect cost is 100 gp. If casting the spell has an XP cost or expensive material component, consult Chapter 8: Magic Items in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for further guidelines.

Spells that have a radius of effect are the easiest to adjudicate. Start by creating some of these, and then try something more challenging, using the magic ammunition presented in this article as a guide. Note that although the article divides the magic ammunition by siege weapon, the ammunition type is usually interchangeable; it's just as easy to create a *defoliant bolt* and *reverse gravity stone* as the versions presented in this article. The following table lists the pertinent information for some types of magic ammunition you might want to create. The prerequisites are the Craft Magic Arms and Armor feat and whatever spell you wish to have the ammunition cause to take effect. Consider also that you can create magic ammunition that causes multiple spells to take effect when fired (an *earthquake, defoliant stone,* for instance). When you do so, double the cost of all but the most expensive spell effect.

Spell Level	Spell	Saving Throw DC	Caster Level	Market Price	GP Cost	XP Cost
1	*grease*	11	1st	50 gp	25 gp	1 XP
2	*sound burst*	13	3rd	300 gp	150 gp	12 XP
3	*stinking cloud*	14	5th	750 gp	375 gp	30 XP
4	*ice storm*	16	7th	2,800 gp	1,400 gp	112 XP
5	*flame strike*	17	9th	4,500 gp	2,250 gp	180 XP
6	*blade barrier*	19	11th	6,600 gp	3,300 gp	264 XP
7	*delayed blast fireball*	20	13th	9,100 gp	4,550 gp	364 XP
8	*power word, blind*	22	15th	12,000 gp	6,000 gp	480 XP
9	*meteor swarm*	23	17th	15,300 gp	7,650 gp	612 XP



under the effect of the *protection from arrows* and *resist elements (fire)* spells. Any non-orc that touches the *fist of Grummsh* suffers 1d8+1 points of electricity damage.

Caster Level: 12th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *protection from arrows, shocking grasp,* and *resist elements;* **Market Price:** 87,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 45,000 gp + 3,360 XP; **Weight:** 1,000 lb.

Ram of Passage

Tipped with a large ornamental iron key, this *+1 ram* allows a wielder to cast *passwall* 3 times per day as if cast by a 9th-level wizard. To activate this ability, the ram must touch the intended surface.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *passwall;* **Market Price:** 61,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 32,000 gp + 2,320 XP; **Weight:** 1,000 lb.

Ram of Rusting

This *+1 ram* is made out of wood, except for a relatively small ram tip at the end made of rusty metal. When touched to a metal object or creature, the ram rusts and corrodes it, dealing 3d6+7 points of damage. There is no saving throw, and spell resistance, damage reduction, and object hardness do not apply.

Caster Level: 7th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *rusting grasp;* **Market Price:** 63,000 gp; **Cost to Create:** 33,000 gp + 2,400 XP; **Weight:** 1,000 lb.

Siege Golem

The siege golem is a terror on the battlefield, as it was created both as a mobile artillery piece and close combat shock troop. It is a large, anthropomorphic figure, with powerful legs, long, flexible arms, and a low-slung head. The entire back of the siege golem mounts a ballista, and it walks hunched over to allow the weapon a clear line of fire.

A siege golem is identical to an iron golem, except that it has no breath weapon and can load and fire the ballista on its back. The siege golem fires its ballista using the same rules as listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—it takes three full-round actions for the golem to reload its ballista.

Caster Level: 16th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *geas/quest, limited wish, polymorph any object;* **Market Price:** 100,500 gp; **Cost to Create:** 90,500 gp + 2,000 XP; **Weight:** 5,800 lb.

Dust of Returning

The returning weapon ability is useful for thrown weapons, but a clever few have taken this principle and perverted it for use in sabotage. If this grayish dust is applied to any form of ammunition, it returns to the source that fired it. Saboteurs commonly sneak into encampments and pour this powder onto ballista bolts, catapult ammunition, and into quivers of arrows.

A single handful of this dust can be applied to one thrown weapon or piece of siege weapon ammunition, or a bundle of up to 50 arrows, crossbow bolts, or sling stones. When the ammunition is fired, it covers only half the distance to its target before returning back to its source. The ammunition strikes at the object that fired it (or the creature, in the case of a thrown weapon) with a ranged attack result identical to the result from when it was fired. If it hits, it deals damage to the object (or creature) normally. The effect lasts until the ammunition is fired and returns or 24 hours elapses.

Caster Level: 9th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *telekinesis;* **Market Price:** 450 gp; **Cost to Create:** 2,260 gp + 180 XP; **Weight:** 60 lb (or less).

Mantlet of Warding

The *mantlet of warding* is usually reserved for generals and other important individuals as they approach a stronghold. It has the same statistics as the iron covered mantlet (described below). In addition, any creature within the 10 feet directly behind the mantlet is protected as though within a mobile *globe of invulnerability.*

Caster Level: 11th; **Prerequisites:** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *globe of invulnerability;* **Market Price:** 171,645 gp; **Cost to Create:** 85,545 gp + 6,864 XP; **Weight:** 250 lb.

Non-Magic Siege Weapons

Specialized magic items can be used to help break the siege outside your gates or bring down your enemy's walls, but there are many options for more mundane defense of your castle or keep, and attackers have a multitude of non-magic weapons to choose from. Here are a few:

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Dwarven Stonebow

The dwarves' natural love and affinity for stone manifests in this siege weapon. It is essentially a large ballista crafted to fire heavy catapult stones instead of bolts. While the stonebow does not have the range of a catapult or trebuchet, it is much more accurate, shooting a heavy catapult stone in a direct line toward a target. Use the ballista rules from the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when firing this weapon.

***Dwarven Stonebow*—Crew:** 4; **Range Increment:** 70 feet; **Damage:** 5d6; **Hardness:** 5; **Hit Points:** 120; **Break DC:** 26; **Market Price:** 850 gp; **Weight:** 1,500 lb.

Halfling Catapult

Halflings make and use an even smaller version of the light catapult (the size of a ballista), which they can mount on carts or their dreaded halfling war wagons. The downside to this smaller weapon is that it requires the crew to get closer to the target, thereby exposing themselves to danger. Only the most martially minded halflings choose this duty. The halfling catapult uses the same targeting rules as the light catapult listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

***Halfling Catapult*—Crew:** 2; **Range Increment:** 120 feet (80-foot minimum); **Damage:** 3d6; **Hardness:** 5; **Hit Points:** 45; **Break DC:** 18; **Market Price:** 550 gp; **Weight:** 800 lb.

Mantlet

In order to protect themselves from incoming missile weapons, many troops build mantlets to cross the battlefield and get close to castle walls. A mantlet consists of a stout wooden wall, approximately 8 feet tall, 5 feet wide, and 3 inches thick, mounted on wheels. It is pushed from behind with two thick poles, like a cart. The mantlet can provide total cover to a Medium-size or smaller creature, depending on how far behind the mantlet the creature stands (see Cover in Chapter 8: Combat of the *Player's Handbook* for more details on cover). Some mantlets have arrow loops through which archers or crossbowmen can shoot from the safety of nine-tenths cover. Any mantlet can have a half-inch layer of iron laid over the wood to reinforce it.

***Mantlet*—Hardness:** 5; **Hit Points:** 30; **Break DC:** 17; **Market Price:** 10 gp; **Weight:** 150 lb.

***Iron Covered Mantlet*—Hardness:** 10/5; **Hit Points:** 15/30; **Break DC:** 22/17; **Market Price:** 45 gp; **Weight:** 250 lb.

Poison Stone

This horrific catapult stone is often carved with scenes of sick and dying people in bas relief. Upon impact, the stone deals damage normally and shatters, spraying a virulent contact poison or poison gas in a 10-foot-radius burst. Creatures in this area cannot avoid the poison unless they have total cover. The price of the stone depends on the type of poison used to create it. Each stone is an alchemical item. You can find the full descriptions of these poisons in the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

Poison Stone	Market Price
Black lotus extract	90,010 gp
Burnt othur fumes	42,010 gp
Carrion crawler brain juice	4,010 gp
Dragon bile	30,010 gp
Insanity mist	30,010 gp
Malyss root paste	10,010 gp
Nitharit	13,010 gp
Sassone leaf residue	6,010 gp
Terinav root	15,010 gp
Ungol dust	20,010 gp

Repeating Ballista

The repeating ballista is essentially a larger version of the repeating crossbow. It has a magazine that holds 6 ballista bolts. It uses the same rules for firing as the normal ballista listed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* except that it takes only 2 full-round actions to cock and load.

***Repeating Ballista*—Crew:** 1; **Range Increment:** 120 feet; **Damage:** 3d6 (x3); **Hardness:** 5; **Hit Points:** 80; **Break DC:** 22; **Market Price:** 700 gp; **Weight:** 900 lb.

Suspended Cauldron

This defensive weapon is found lined around the walls of a fortification. It is a very large iron pot that holds boiling or flaming liquid and is suspended from a mechanism that allows defenders to pull a chain to tip its contents on attackers. Common contents for the cauldron include boiling water, boiling oil (or tar), lye, and hot sand. A typical cauldron is about 5 feet wide and 5 feet deep, capable of holding 2,500 gallons of liquid.

When tipped, the contents spill to the ground (which must be at least 10 feet below for a proper splash), splashing outward in a 15-foot-radius spread. Any creatures caught within 5 feet of the center of the affected area take 1d3 points of subdual damage and must make a Strength check (DC 15) or be knocked prone by the force of the attack. In addition, a creature in this area must successfully make a Reflex saving throw (DC 18) or take full damage from the substance (half damage on a successful save). A creature in the splash area but not within 5 feet of the center must make a Reflex saving throw (DC 13) or take full damage from the substance (half damage on a successful save).

Once dumped, it takes a crew of four people 10 minutes to upright and refill the cauldron, assuming a sufficient supply of ammunition is on hand. In addition, it takes an hour for hot ammunition (such as oil, water, or sand) to reach a temperature that will cause damage assuming a fire of at least campfire size is kept lit beneath it.

***Suspended Cauldron*—Crew:** 4; **Hardness:** 10; **Hit Points:** 50; **Break DC:** 24; **Market Price:** 100 gp; **Weight:** 300 lb.

The various types of ammunition have different effects.

***Boiling Oil*—Damage:** 5d6 points of fire damage (from heat), and for 1d3 rounds thereafter the victim suffers another 1d6 points of fire damage (from heat); **Special:** oil can be set ablaze before or after pouring, causing an additional 1d6 points of fire damage each round for 3d6 rounds or until extinguished (see alchemist's fire in the *Player's Handbook* for extinguishing rules); **Market Price:** 1,400 gp.

***Boiling Tar*—Damage:** 5d6 points of fire damage (from heat), and for 2d4 rounds thereafter the victim suffers another 1d6 points of fire damage (from heat); **Market Price:** 700 gp or free (assuming there is a nearby tarpit).

***Boiling Water*—Damage:** 5d6 points of fire damage (from heat); **Market Price:** 0 gp.

***Lye*—Damage:** 3d6 points of acid damage, and for 1d3 rounds thereafter the victim suffers another 1d6 points of acid damage; **Special:** poison lye fumes—Fortitude save (DC 13), initial damage and secondary damage 1d2 temporary Constitution; **Market Price:** 1,500 gp.

***Hot Sand*—Damage:** 3d6 points of fire damage (from heat); **Special:** Reflex save (DC 12) or be blinded for 1d3 rounds; **Market Price:** 0 gp.

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My grave liege,

I regret to inform you that Draulstaak, the Black Worm of Avernus, has been hired by one of your enemies to kill you. Be sure to gird yourself against acid, and be alert for his minions, who have unusually large, red-rimmed eyes. I am working to discover who hired him and if he can be turned away from this task without an overt battle.

In lighter news, I have succeeded in opening the clasp of the *Book of the Fifth Shadow* and only had to sacrifice the lives of three slaves to do it. Upon first perusal, the book contains several spells pertaining to shadow illusions, a ritual for binding a shadow demon, and the location of a fortress on the Shadow Plane said to hold an artifact of a dead Suel goddess. I shall attempt to establish the veracity of this latter subject and determine its value to us.

Toskara's transformation into a stench kow is proceeding apace, and I have not been able to reverse or slow it, but I do suspect that the *blood bane of fiendish purity* spell is to blame. Assuming that this metamorphosis shall be complete within a week, how shall I dispose of her?

Your servant,

the Fiend-Sage, Rel Astra

Cataboligne Demon

These demons were unknown to me until recently, when the report of one serving as a guardian was given to me by one of my spies in Greyhawk who heard the tale from a young rogue. After some research, I discovered that one of my former slaves, an old hezrou named Gsstarkaneth, had fought against one centuries ago and was able to tell me about these nearly extinct Abyssal dwellers. In any case, they are almost unheard of on any of the Abyssal planes I have frequented, and it is possible that they live in one of the more inhospitable layers or have moved to another plane entirely after suffering terrible losses at the hands of the tanar'ri. They are about as powerful as a vrock, but have few special abilities that would give them a fighting chance against anything more powerful. I have not been able to acquire an actual body for study, but I suspect that there is little to them that might serve useful that could not be found in other fiendish corpses.

Cataboligne Demon
Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil)
Hit Dice: 9d8+45 (85 hp)
Initiative: +8 (Dex, Improved Initiative)
Speed: 40 ft., fly 50 ft. (average)
AC: 27 (-1 size, +4 Dex, +14 natural)
Attacks: 2 claws +13 melee, bite +8 melee
Damage: Claw 1d6+5, bite 1d8+3
Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Acid resistance 20, blindsight 60 ft., cold resistance 20, DR 15/+3, immunities (electricity, poison), outsider, regeneration 5, SR 22
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +7
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 18, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 12, Cha 14
Skills: Bluff +14, Climb +12, Concentration +17, Hide +10, Listen +13, Search +8, Sense Motive +10, Spellcraft +7, Spot +8, Tumble +14
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any land and underground
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 12
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 10-18 HD (Large), 19-27 HD (Huge)

Cataboligne demons are crafty outsiders native to the Abyss. Enemies of the tanar'ri, their numbers are declining and many are bound as guardians for mortal treasures.

Cataboligne demons are scaled and horned, with strong claws on their hands and a spade-ended tail. Unlike most demons, they lack wings, but their magic allows them to fly. Their eyes are bulbous, with slit pupils. Broad of frame but with a lanky build, cataboligne demons have an uncanny catlike grace and speed. The demon's voice is that of a beautiful female human or elf, and when it detects visitors, the illusion-shrouded demon announces its presence to mislead them from its true nature.

Cataboligne demons are thought to come from a part of the Abyss where cold and electricity are more prevalent than fire. Long-standing enemies of the tanar'ri, their rarity leads many Oerthly sages to believe that the cataboligne demons are on the losing end of a continuing war.

Mortals are likely to encounter these demons in old crypts and treasure chambers, as their abilities make them suitable guardians for delicate treasures. Others ally themselves with evil mages and clerics

GINGWATZIM

	PAKIM Small Elemental (Air)	GRAEGZIM Medium-Size Elemental (Air)	EOLUZIM Large Elemental (Air)	MARONZIM Large Elemental (Air)	NARANZIM Large Elemental (Air)
Hit Dice:	2d8+2 (13 hp)	3d8+6 (19 hp)	4d8+8 (26 hp)	6d8+12 (39 hp)	8d8+16 (52 hp)
Initiative:	+1 (Dex)	+0	+0	+0	+4 (Improved Initiative)
Speed:	20 ft, fly 40 ft. (perfect)	30 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)	30 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)	30 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)	30 ft., fly 40 ft. (perfect)
AC:	15 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +3 natural)	16 (+4 natural)	14 (-1 size, +5 natural)	15 (-1 size, +6 natural)	16 (-1 size, +7 natural)
Attacks:	Touch +2 melee	Touch +3 melee	Touch +7 melee	Touch +8 melee	Touch +10 melee
Damage:	1d2 temporary Strength	1d4 temporary Strength	1d6 temporary Strength	1d6 temporary Strength	1d8 temporary Strength
Face/Reach:	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.	5 ft. by 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Alternate forms, elemental traits, DR 5/+1, telepathy	Alternate forms, elemental traits, DR 10/+1, telepathy	Alternate forms, elemental traits, DR 10/+2, SR 13, telepathy	Alternate forms, elemental traits, DR 10/+2, spell-like abilities, SR 15, telepathy	Alternate forms, elemental traits, DR 10/+3, spell-like abilities, SR 18, telepathy
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +0	Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1	Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +1	Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +3	Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +5
Abilities:	Str 10, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 5	Str 12, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 10, Cha 7	Str 20, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 11	Str 20, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11	Str 20, Dex 11, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 13
Skills:	Hide +7, Listen +2, Move Silently +3, Spot +2	Hide +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Spot +4	Hide +0, Intimidate +2, Listen +4, Move Silently +2, Spot +4	Concentration +4, Hide +0, Knowledge (any two) +3, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Spellcraft +3, Spot +5.	Concentration +10, Hide +0, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (any two) +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +4, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +6, Spot +5.
Feats:	Flyby Attack	Flyby Attack	Flyby Attack	Flyby Attack	Combat Casting, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will
Climate/Terrain:	Any land and underground	Any land and underground	Any land and underground	Any land and underground	Any land and underground
Organization:	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary	Solitary
CR:	1	2	2	4	7
Treasure:	None	None	None	None	None
Alignment:	Usually neutral	Often neutral evil	Often neutral evil	Usually neutral evil	Usually neutral evil
Advancement:	See text	See text	See text	See text	See text

in hopes of tempting souls, for their powers of illusion and persuasion are strong and subtle.

Cataboligne demons speak and understand Common, Abyssal, and Infernal, and most know at least one other mortal language, such as Elven. Unlike tanar'ri, they do not have the natural ability to communicate telepathically with other beings.

Combat

Cataboligne demons like to prepare a battlefield to their advantage, using their spell-like abilities to bring darkness upon foes, negate enemies' magic, and neutralize the most powerful enemy first before engaging in melee combat. A cataboligne demon's *mage armor* gives off a blue glow and is often mistaken for another spell effect such as *fire shield.* Unlike the tanar'ri, cataboligne demons are not immune to fire, which may be a contributing factor to their losses in the war.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will—*cause fear, change self, charm person, darkness, dispel magic, hallucinatory terrain, hold person, levitate, mage armor, magic missile, minor image.* These abilities are as the spells cast by a 9th-level sorcerer (DC 12 + spell level).

Regeneration (Ex): Blessed weapons, holy weapons, and fire deal normal damage to the demon. It can regrow or reattach severed body parts.

Gingwatzim

Were I to compose a treatise on the weakness of the Baklunish, I might start by comparing the powerful demons used to guard Oeridian troves with the indolent, slow-witted air elementals employed for similar purposes in the west. These creatures, known as gingwatzims, are minor predators on the Ethereal Plane, but their greatest value on this plane is that they are easily bound into the form of a magic weapon. While this may seem desirable, the binding is easily dispelled. Far less effective than simply forcing a demon to do one's bidding, in my considerably experienced opinion.

That said, the gingwatzims were first bound by the legendary Last Amir of Beit Castan, and that relationship alone is enough to encourage further study.

Gingwatzims are gaseous elemental beings that live on the Ethereal Plane. They are brought to the Material Plane by arcane magic, bound into solid forms, and used as guards.

In its natural state, a gingwatzim is a faintly glowing sphere of semisolid swirling gases. Each subtype of gingwatzim has its own color. A powerful spell brings a gingwatzim to the material plane, and the spellcaster can choose two additional forms for the creature: one of a living creature and one of an inanimate object (typically a magic weapon). The more intelligent gingwatzims resent this service and often try to escape or kill their controller.

In its natural state, or free form, the gingwatzim serves as a guardian for an area, attacking creatures that enter its territory. In an animate form, it usually pretends to be a pet, familiar, or advisor of its controller, depending upon its form. In its object form, a gingwatzim is a magic weapon and is usually wielded by its controller or another being to whom it is given.

Gingwatzims understand Common and Auran but cannot speak any languages. They use telepathy to communicate with their own kind and other creatures.

As a gingwatzim grows larger, it metamorphoses into a different kind of gingwatzim. Thus, a 2-HD pakim that gains an additional Hit Die turns into a 3-HD graegzim and could eventually turn into a eoluzim if it gained yet another Hit Die. It is thought that these beings reproduce by splitting into several smaller creatures of equal size.

Combat

When in their natural state, gingwatzims have a touch attack that deals Strength damage, which is how they feed. Against creatures that are immune to ability damage, they flee or change to their animate form if possible. As they are solitary predators on the Ethereal Plane, their main tactic is to harry a creature with successive attacks and retreats until it succumbs to Strength damage.

Gingwatzim Qualities

Alternate Forms (Su): Conjured gingwatzims are assigned two additional forms by the magic of the spell that calls them. The animate and object forms are chosen and fixed when the gingwatzim is called and cannot be changed unless the creature is returned to the Ethereal Plane. The gingwatzim can assume one of its other forms or return to its natural form as a free action once per round. Often (especially in the case of less intelligent gingwatzim) their controller orders them to remain in one particular form.

In the form of another creature, the gingwatzim retains its own ability scores and other abilities, and its deflection bonus becomes a natural armor bonus. It gains none of the assumed form's ability scores or abilities in any way, and it retains the immunities of its elemental type. Armor class and skill bonuses based on size (such as Hide) use the new form's size instead of the gingwatzim's normal size.

In object form, a gingwatzim cannot move itself or drain Strength using its touch attack ability, and it loses its deflection bonus. When it takes the form of a weapon, a gingwatzim has an enhancement bonus equal to the bonus that would bypass its own damage reduction. For example, a pakim gingwatzim, which has damage reduction 5/+1, that takes the form of a longsword is effectively a *+1 longsword.*

Telepathy (Su): Gingwatzims can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet as long as that creature has a language. The low Intelligence of some gingwatzims hampers their ability to communicate anything but the most basic concepts.

Pakim

Pakim gingwatzims in their natural form are green air spheres with a diameter of 4 feet. Pakims have poor reasoning skills and can only understand simple commands. Particularly docile, they often don't bother to resist their master's control. They can be bound into the form of an animal or plant of up to Small size. In object form, they can be +1 weapons with no magical properties.

Graegzim

Graegzim in their natural form are gray air spheres with a diameter of 6 feet. They have poor memories and cannot

Summoning Gingwatzim

The legendary Last Amir of the Zeifan city of Biet Castan first discovered the means by which gingwatzim can be summoned and bound on the Material Plane. His knowledge has passed down in the centuries since his disappearance, and written commentaries and instructions regarding the practice are commonplace in grimoires found throughout the western Flanaess, allowing lesser spellcasters to bring the creatures to Oerth using the standard *summon monster* spells.

Pakim can be summoned and bound via *summon monster II*. *Summon monster III* is adequate to summon graegim and eoluzim, and maronzim can be brought to the Material Plane via *summon monster IV*. The relatively powerful naranzim can be summoned and bound by *summon monster V*.

handle complicated instructions. Their animate forms can be animals, plants, or fey of up to Medium-size. In object form, they can be +1 weapons with no magical properties. They have an annoying habit of telepathically complaining to their owner when they are not being used.

Eoluzim

Violet spheres of air with a diameter of 8 feet, eoluzims are aggressive and violent. They are usually bound into an animate form of some kind of evil humanoid, although they can be given animal, plant, or fey forms of Medium-size or smaller. Often they are given roles as leaders to regular humanoids. In object form, they are +1 weapons with a +1-equivalent property, such as flaming, frost, or shock.

Maronzim

Reasonably intelligent and gifted with additional magic powers, maronzims in their natural state are yellow air spheres with a diameter of 10 feet. They have excellent memories and evaluate situations without the burden of emotion, making them somewhat dangerous because of their inclination to subtly rebel against their controller. Maronzims are usually bound into the form of a human, elf, or half-elf, but they can be bound into the form of any humanoid, fey, animal, or plant of Large size or smaller. In their object form, they are often bound as rods or staffs, allowing them to use their spell-like abilities without appearing to be anything other than a magic item. Other common object forms are +1 weapons with a +1-equivalent property, such as *defending*, *ghost touch*, or *keen*.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will—*color spray, ghost sound, invisibility* (self only), *Nystul's magic aura, Nystul's undetectable aura, silent image, ventriloquism;* 1/day—*blur* (self only), *hypnotic pattern, minor image, mirror image, misdirection*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 3rd-level sorcerer (DC 10 + spell level).

Naranzim

The most powerful of the gingwatzims, naranzims in their natural form are red-orange spheres with a diameter of 15 feet. Mysterious and impossible to control, little is known about them or their role in gingwatzim society. They hate forced servitude and always work to destroy their controllers. They can be bound into the form of any Large or smaller humanoid, fey, animal, or plant. In object form, they are shaped into rods or wands like the maronzims, or made into +1 weapons with a +2-equivalent property such as *bane, unholy*, or *wounding*.

Unlike other gingwatzims, naranzims that advance usually do not split into multiple gingwatzims, preferring to enjoy their own growing power. As it becomes more powerful, a naranzim gains access to more Illusion spells, each of which can be used once per day as a spell-like ability:

- 12 HD: *improved invisibility, phantasmal killer, rainbow pattern*.
- 16 HD: *dream, nightmare, persistent image*.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At *will—color spray, ghost sound, invisibility* (self only), *Nystul's magic aura, Nystul's undetectable aura, silent image, ventriloquism;* 3/day—*blur* (self only), *hypnotic pattern, minor image, mirror image, misdirection;* 1/day—*displacement, invisibility sphere, major image* (with itself as the targeted recipient only). These abilities are as the spells cast by a 5th-level sorcerer (DC 10 + spell level).

Campaign News

Deeper Toward Woe

Last month, we warned of the impending doom that is the *Isles of Woe* special event, which will be unleashed at the 2002 *Origins Games Expo*. In that issue's Campaign News, we presented preview encounters for that event, accompanied by a challenge to you: Play the introduction encounter on your own time before the convention, and be ready to summarize what happens to your *Origins* judge. If you don't come loaded with grand tales of heroic deeds accomplished at the boathouse leading to the Isles, things will be much more difficult for you once you arrive.

When you play the preview encounters, you don't gain experience points or gold. If your characters die, you can keep on playing your character (just pretend it never happened). If you do die, you might want to rethink your plans on plundering the Isles of Woe. . .

As promised, this month we present Encounter Levels 8-12.

The Once-Submerged Boathouse

The long trek through the limestone caves has brought you to this strange underground cove. The cave entrance to this place is obscured by seaweed, and only a little light trickles in through the vegetation. The walls are decorated with strange symbols and artwork in a style unlike anything you have ever seen. Upon the shore sit three longships. None have sails, and all are made of what appears to be corroded copper. In the center of each ship stands a column with a steering wheel attached.

This is the Heraan Boathouse—the once-lost passage to the strange, obscured city that dominates the Isles of Woe. Once aboard the strange arcane boats, the characters can cross over to the magical isles. But the characters are not the only ones who have found (or are looking for) this place. Before they board the boats, the characters must defeat monsters lurking here.

Average Party Level 6, EL 8

Assassin Vines (4): hp 48, 47, 35, 32; see the *Monster Manual*.

Shambling Mound (11 HD): CR 7; size Large; hp 110; AC 20 (touch 9, flat-footed 20); Add +2 to attacks, +1 to saves; see the *Monster Manual*.

Average Party Level 8, EL 10

The four sisters, aquatic elf wraiths (4): hp 50, 47, 40, 35; as standard wraith, see the *Monster Manual*.

Kahg: female scrag Clr5; CR 9; Large giant; HD 11d8+66; hp 132; Init +2; Speed 15 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 22 (touch 11, flat-footed 20); Atk +12 melee (1d6+6, 2 claws) and +7 melee (1d6+2, bite), or +14/+9 (2d6+10, +1 Huge greatclub); SA Rend 2d6+9, spells, spontaneous cast inflict spells, rebuke undead; SQ: Regeneration 5, scent, darkvision 90 ft.; Face/Reach: 5 ft. by 5 ft./10 ft.; AL CE; SV Fort +15, Ref +1, Will +10; Str 23, Dex 14, Con 23, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Listen +5, Spellcraft +5, Spot +5; Alertness, Cleave, Iron Will, Power Attack.

Rend (Ex): If Kahg hits with both claw attacks, she latches onto her opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+9 points of damage.

Regeneration (Ex): Fire and acid deal normal damage to a scrag. Scrags only regenerate when they are mostly immersed in water.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1/1+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): *0—create water, resistance* (2) *virtue* (2); *1st—entropic shield, inflict light wounds*, divine favor, obscuring mist, shield of faith; 2nd—bull's strength, death knell, endurance, spiritual weapon**; 3rd—*contagion*, protection from elements.*

*Domain spell. Deity: Vaprak; Domains: Destruction (Smite (Su): 1/day—on a declared attack against a foe, gain +4 attack bonus, +5 damage bonus) and War (Free Marital Weapon Proficiency [greatclub], and Weapon Focus [greatclub]).

Possessions: +1 Shark hide armor, +1 Huge greatclub, pearl of power (1st-level).

Average Party Level 10, EL 12

Guifren and Xinzol: blue slaads: hp 72, 65; see the *Monster Manual*.

Wide Eyes (Ex): Guifren has wide eyes, granting him a +1 bonus to Spot checks (Spot +9).

Hjur'fiunt: gray slaad Sor1; CR 11; Medium-size outsider (chaotic); HD 10d8+1d4+33; hp 90; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 13, flat-footed 23); Atk +14 melee (2d4+4, claws); +12 bite (2d8+2, bite); SA Spell-like abilities; summon slaad, breath weapon; SQ Fast healing 4, damage reduction 10/+1, resitance, alternate form; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +12; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Climb +15, Hide +14, Jump +17; Knowledge (arcana) +13; Listen +15; Move Silently +14; Search +15, Spot +15; Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Multiattack.

Resistance (Ex): Hjur'fiunt has acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic resistance 5.

Spell-like Abilities: At will—*animate objects, chaos hammer, deeper darkness, detect magic, dispel law, fly, identify, invisibility, lightning bolt, magic circle against law, see invisibility, shatter*, and *power word, blind*. These abilities are as the spells cast by a 15th-level sorcerer (save DC 12 + spell level).

Alternate Form (Su): A gray slaad can shift between its natural and any humanoid form at will as a standard action. A gray slaad remains in humanoid form indefinitely. This ability is otherwise similar to *polymorph self* cast by a 10th-level sorcerer.

Summon Slaad (Sp): Twice per day a gray slaad also can attempt to summon 1-2 red slaadi or 1 blue slaad with a 40% chance of success, or 1 green slaad with a 20% chance of success.

Breath Weapon (Su): Hjur'fiunt can produce a 20-foot cone of painful pulsating sound that does 3d6 points of sonic damage (Reflex save DC 18 for half).

Spells Known (5/4; base DC = 12 + spell level); 0—*daze, ghost sound, prestidigitation, resistance*; 2nd—*protection from good, shield.*

Possessions: Ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1.

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by Chris Pramas

The Children of Nassica

Scattered throughout the Sundered Empire are five standing stones of breathtaking beauty: the Children of Nassica. Although pleasing to the eye, they commemorate the terrible days of the Demon War.

Some 1500 years ago, abyssal gateways opened in what is now the heart of Ravilla. Demons under the command of Yeenoghu and Baphomet swarmed through the gateways, bringing fire and death to all who opposed them. On the verge of extinction, the wood elves pleaded with their gray elf cousins for aid. The gray elves answered the call, and soon armies were on the march.

Among the eager gray elf recruits, none were more zealous than the Children of Nassica. These five siblings swore on the grave of their father that they would hound the demons back to the Abyss or die in the attempt. Their mother, Nassica, wept as her children marched to war. She said nothing to her brave sons and daughters but knew with a cold certainty that she would never see her children again.

One by one her children fell in battle. When only Tarkinn, her youngest, was left alive, Nassica wrote an impassioned missive to her son, begging him to return home before he too was slain. Tarkinn refused, and he was killed in battle within the year.

Hundreds of years after it began, the Demon War finally ended, and the elves and their allies were victorious. For the first time, Nassica left her home to visit the places where her children fell.

Determined that her children not be forgotten, Nassica used mighty magic to pull stones from the bowels of the earth at each of the battlefields. These standing stones remain as monuments to the sacrifice of her children. Tarkinn's stone was the last, and when the final piece was in place and Nassica's work done, she lay down at the foot of the monument and died. Her grief has never been forgotten by the elven people, and the standing stones have been sacred to Ravilla since the empire's founding.

USING THE STANDING STONES

The stones can be used as terrain in your CHAINMAIL game or as areas of interest in a D&D game. In CHAINMAIL, you can either build 3-D terrain, or you can substitute the hut or mausoleum from the CHAINMAIL terrain cards. A standing stone allows no movement and blocks line of sight. Each stone also has a special game effect.

GLACCA, STONE OF MERCY

Glacca was a famed huntress who turned her skill with the bow against the demonic armies of the Abyss. Known for her mercy, Glacca believed that death should always be quick. One evening, after hours of furious battle, elves and demons broke off the engagement to regroup. Out in the darkness, Glacca could hear the piteous cries of the elven wounded. Distraught, she went to aid those she could and offer a merciful death to those too wounded to survive. As she bent over a fallen comrade, a demon concealed in a pile of corpses leapt upon Glacca and snapped her neck with a well-practiced twist. At least her own death was quick.

The Stone of Mercy's effect:

CHAINMAIL: Any model within 6 inches of the stone reduced to 0 health is slain instead of being knocked down.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: Any creature within 30 feet of the Stone of Mercy that falls to 0 hit points or below takes an additional 1d10 points of damage.

ARIAS, STONE OF VENGEANCE

In the days of peace, Arias was a famous sculptor and artist. Like his siblings, he took up the cause of his wood elf cousins. When he saw the scenes of rapine and slaughter with his own eyes, he was filled with a burning desire for vengeance. His icy cold blade cut a swathe through his demonic foes in countless battles. In the defense of Golden Blossom Village, however, he put vengeance ahead of good tactics. After beating off a minotaur attack, he led a sortie out of the village and walked straight into a deadly ambush.

The Stone of Vengeance's effect:

CHAINMAIL: When a model within 6 inches of the stone is killed, the model that struck the killing blow (whether by melee, missile, or spell) suffers 1 point of damage.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS: When a creature within 30 feet of the stone is killed, the enemy that struck the killing

blow (whether by melee, missile, or spell) immediately suffers 1d8 points of damage.

ANCUS, STONE OF HATRED

Of all the Children of Nassica, Ancus came the closest to letting the Demon War corrupt his soul. He was sickened by the crimes of the invading armies, and his desire for justice quickly turned into an all-consuming hatred for his foes. A wizard of consummate skill, Ancus delighted in raining death upon the hordes of the Abyss. In his final battle, he cast all his spells in quick succession, laughing as demons disintegrated about him. The battle was long though, and when a dreaded Balor arrived in the field, Ancus had naught but cantrips with which to oppose him. In the end, Ancus's hatred could not save him.

The Stone of Hatred's effect:

Chainmail: Any model that starts its turn within 6 inches of the stone must attack the closest enemy model, regardless of commands to the contrary. If the model moves, it must move toward the nearest enemy model.

Dungeons & Dragons: Any creature that starts its turn within 30 feet of the stone must attack the closest enemy with a melee weapon, missile weapon, or spell. If an affected creature moves, it must do so directly toward the nearest enemy.

SEVVERA, STONE OF HONOR

Sevvera's skill with the blade was legendary, and nothing pleased her more than single combat with a worthy opponent. In battle, she sought out enemy champions and challenged them to duels. In the course of the war, she defeated 49 minions of evil in such engagements. Sevvera's 50th duel was a long one, and her comrades were swept away by the tide of battle. The demon lord she was fighting knew he was outclassed and so summoned more of his kin from the depths of the Abyss. Surrounded by foes who knew no chivalry, Sevvera fell beneath their hacking blades.

The Stone of Honor's effect:

Chainmail: Any model within 6 inches of the stone temporarily gains the Immune to Sneak Attacks ability. Furthermore, single models facing two or more enemies gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls. Conversely, enemy models are denied the multiple attackers bonus.

Dungeons & Dragons: Creatures within 30 feet of the stone temporarily gain Uncanny Dodge as if they were 6th-level rogues. Additionally, they gain a +1 bonus to hit and damage while in melee with two or more enemies.

TARKINN, STONE OF SORROW

In happier times, Tarkinn was a bard. He used his music to shore up the spirits of his comrades and his magic to fight the foe. As his siblings died one by one, his heart filled with sorrow. Soon he could no longer sing the martial songs that inspired elven bravery, only mournful dirges that tore at the soul. When his mother begged him to return home, his heart wanted nothing more than to fulfill her request, but he knew he could not betray his oath. When his position was overrun by feral gnolls later that year, Tarkinn didn't try to flee. He embraced his fate and died without a sound.

The Stone of Sorrow's effect:

Chainmail: Any model that starts its turn within 6 inches of the stone must make a Save (DC 12) or be overcome with sorrow and loss. This has the same effect as the *daze* spell, except models of any level can be affected.

Dungeons & Dragons: Any creature within 30 feet of the stone must make a Will saving throw (DC 12) each round or be overcome with thoughts of sorrow and loss. This has the same effect as the *daze* spell, except creatures of any number of Hit Dice can be affected.

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COMMAND POINTS

by Rob Heinsoo

More Players, More Fun

Difficulty

- Easy, with practice you should be able to pull this off in most games.
- Simple, but not a sure thing
- Average difficulty, can be messed up by your opponent or bad luck.
- Hard to pull off, takes effort and skill
- Very hard to get right

Impact

- Not such a big deal
- Helpful
- Very helpful trick, can help you win the game
- Extremely effective tactic
- Potentially decisive tactic

Design warbands that can apply their force at the same time.

Difficulty:

Impact:

It's tempting and fun to design warbands that can do a little bit of everything, but the most successful do-it-all warbands remember the key to success: Every round of the skirmish, all of your models should either be doing something useful or moving toward the moment when they will be able to do something useful.

A Mordengard warband that sends Dire Badgers ahead, following up with much slower Stonechildren and Dwarven Fighters, risks having its Dire Badgers ganged up on and slaughtered before they've done any real damage and long before the rest of the dwarves reach the battle.

A Naresh warband that sends an Abyssal Ravager (speed 10) ahead to wreak havoc risks losing the model if it can't prevent the enemy from applying it's full force against the lone attacker.

In other words, don't play like the bad guys in a Bruce Lee movie! Don't send entirely separate waves of troops against the enemy, giving your foe the chance to fight each troop or wave of troops with his full army.

It's fine to build a warband with models that have different speeds, and it can be very effective to play warbands that have two or three different waves of models to assault the enemy. Just make sure that you set up and command your troops so that they threaten the enemy at roughly the same time.

Cast spells if you win the scouting check.

Difficulty:

Impact:

If you win the scouting check, every spellcaster in your warband is allowed to cast a spell before the battle begins. Most players don't forget this opportunity, but some fail to remember that they can cast a spell with each spellcaster on their side, not just a single spellcaster.

Move over knocked-down models.

Difficulty:

Impact:

You can't move through models that are standing, but players often forget that they can move their models over others that are knocked down. As long as you don't end movement on a knocked-down model, your model can move over knocked-down models at a cost of 1" of movement.

This tactic works well for a model that plans to attack an enemy model that is still standing and is in base-to-base contact with a previously knocked-down model from its own warband. You can move over the knocked-down foe to attack its ally. After finishing off the standing model, you can attack its knocked-down comrade without needing a command point to maneuver toward it. (Remember: Models can always stand still, but they move toward standing enemy models in line-of-sight if they are not commanded to maneuver).

Use spare command points to re-roll initiative.

Difficulty:

Impact:

Your opponent rolls an 18 initiative, you roll a 5. To win initiative, you'd have to roll a 19 or 20. If you spend a command point to re-roll your initiative, you still only have a 10% chance of succeeding. Looks like a waste of a command point, right? Depending on the situation, it might not be a bad idea.

When rolling initiative, look at the skirmish and consider how many command points you are likely to need that turn. Early in the battle you might opt to keep all of your command

points in order to maneuver your troops into advantageous positions, especially if you are playing with Difficult troops. But once troops are locked into melee, there can be less call for using points for maneuvering and even more reason to win initiative and be the first to attack.

Commanders with an odd number of command points—such as the Dwarf Fighter (3) and the Fiendish Gnoll Cleric (3)—are often able to afford to burn a point re-rolling initiative, keeping the crucial 2 points necessary to give a model a +2 to hit later in the round. A 5-point commander like Thalos's Human Paladin or Ahmut's Human Shadow Cleric can also afford to spend a point re-rolling initiative.

Just remember that it costs a command point to put a routing troop under command in order to rally it. This can be important, because doing so gives the routing troop an additional bonus to its morale save.

You can move away from melee contact, and sometimes it's the only way to win.

Difficulty:

Impact:

Moving away from an enemy model that is in melee contact with you is risky business. First you make a morale save to avoid routing. Then you take an opportunity attack from all enemy models that are in melee contact with you. In fact, moving away from enemy models is so risky that players often mentally label the tactic as "suicidal" and never give it another thought.

That's a mistake. Sometimes moving away from melee contact is the best trick you can pull.

For example, a Stonechild and a Dwarf Zealot are both in melee contact with a Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll. The Dwarf Fighter stands behind the Stonechild and Zealot but too far away to maneuver into contact and get an attack this round. The Human Shadow Priest stands behind the Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll. Imagine that you are the Mordengard player and that it is your turn to act. You know that the Human Shadow Cleric can cast a *soundburst* spell and cause damage to both your Stonechild and your Zealot, and also have the chance to stun them for a turn. What you really want is to engage the Human Shadow Priest, but your Dwarf Fighter is too far away.

What you need to do is put the Dwarf Zealot under command for 2 command points (the Zealot has the Difficult x2 ability) and maneuver it into base-to-base contact with the Human Shadow Cleric. The Zealot is a Fearless model, so it doesn't have to make a morale save for moving away from melee contact. The Slaughterpit Zombie Gnoll still gets an opportunity attack against the Zealot, but the Zombie only inflicts 2 points of damage, not enough to trouble the Zealot, who has 5 health. If the Human Shadow Cleric is within 5 inches, the Dwarf Zealot gets to attack. Now the Shadow Cleric has to make a save (DC 15 + the spell's level) if it wants to cast a spell.

This tactic works best for models with the Fearless ability: Dwarf Zealots, Orc Berserkers, constructs, and undead. You can also try this tactic with a model that doesn't have the Fearless ability if it is wounded and routing, and if you suspect that you could rally it but can't keep it alive if it remains in melee.

In the endgame, when you appear headed for certain defeat, this trick can throw your opponent's victory celebration into a panic. He'll likely look at your troops and believe that you are outnumbered and outgunned, when suddenly you run straight past his models in an attempt to luck into a victory.

Time your attacks to win opportunity attacks against routing models.

Diffulty:

Impact:

Keep track of how close you are to inflicting half damage on enemy models (this causes models to make a morale saving throw). If you have the option, don't inflict the "final hit" that causes the morale save with a melee attack from the only model that can make an opportunity attack against the enemy model if it routs.

In other words, if you are planning to move into melee with an enemy model, you might want to resist the temptation to "soften up" that enemy with spells and missiles until after your melee model is in base-to-base contact with the enemy.

The *magic missile* spell provides the classic example. It's a nearly infallible source of 1 point of damage. Unless the *magic missile* alone is enough to cause a morale save, you'll want to wait and use the spell until after your melee fighter has attacked the target. Ideally, the *magic missile* will cause the point of damage that forces a morale save. When the enemy model fails the morale save, your own melee fighter cuts the fleeing enemy down with an opportunity attack.

Spellcasters that have no problem firing their spells into melee, and missile users with the Precise Shot ability should nearly always wait to choose the optimum targets. Missile users who do not have the Precise Shot ability have more complex choices to make, but if they have the Point Blank Shot +2 ability, they might still be better off gambling for the chance to force an enemy model into routing and therefore suffering opportunity attacks.

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Logging in Character

You: [Recapping last week's session with a reading from your character's journal] "We fought some hive rats, and I took 32 points of damage because of those freaky stinger things they had. I think their challenge rating should have been higher, but the DM always underestimates CRs when she designs new monsters. Then we—"

DM: Excuse the interruption, but whose journal is this again?

You: Pelevin Straightsword, Gilded Champion of the Ur Dynasty.

DM: Uh-huh.

Last time we looked at general techniques you can use when creating a personal log for your character. A log can serve to recap the action, bind the other PCs to yours, and encourage the DM to build your agenda into her adventures. Now that we know what we want to write and why, it's time to figure out how to do it.

You don't have to be a polished writer to create a journal for your character. All you really need to do is cover the important points of each session as briefly as possible. No one expects deathless prose.

However, there are tricks you can adopt to give extra zing to your journals, making them sound more like your character's voice. Find (at a bookstore, library, or your own bookshelf) a few stories or novels written in the first person. Compare a few paragraphs from each, and see how the authors use word choice and sentence structure to convey a sense of the narrator's personality.

Now, think about your character's personality. If you got a letter from him, what would you first notice about his style? What would his writing tell you about who he is and how he behaves?

If you're confident about your creative writing skills, you can answer those two questions and then just start writing. However, if you're uncertain, don't worry: Almost everyone feels unsure when they begin. Below you'll find some off-the-rack prose styles ready for use in your own journals. Each includes a sample, a description of the technique, notes on the personality it evokes, and a list of the D&D characters most likely to use it. To make the comparison easier to understand, each example describes the same event. These examples don't begin to encompass every possible PC personality, but they cover the simplest styles and give you models to emulate when you decide to do something different.

ABSTRACT

Much like a scientific abstract, this style is plain, informative, and focused on cause and effect.

Sample: The most important thing we learned was that the librarian, Utherl, was a betrayer and a father-slayer. He tried to get us killed by leading us into a fight with dangerous creatures. He was foolish to send us there, because we found his father's corpse and learned the story of his treachery. Now we must decide what to do about him.

Personality: This character is a straightforward, educated thinker who likes to cut to the heart of the matter. He sees his journal as a tool that helps him think his way through problems.

Techniques: Lay out the essential facts without getting specific about how you learned them. Don't worry about presenting images, evoking emotions, or varying sentence structure. Focus on your conclusions and the choices that await you.

Character Types: Gnomes, wizards, scholars, experienced characters.

BREATHLESS

This style conveys excitement and fast-paced, turbulent activity. Because it uses run-on sentences and complicated clauses, readers might have a hard time keeping up with the journal.

Sample: Then we went down into the catacombs where the librarian (what's his name—with the long, braided beard) told us to go, and it turned out that he had betrayed us because it was full of hive rats. We fought them bitterly, and I was the most injured of all, but we prevailed. So then we opened the coffin that the librarian said was full of treasure, but instead we saw it had a skeleton in it, and Tuvo the cleric called on the powers of the gods and found out it was the librarian's father, whom the librarian had killed, the treacherous scoundrel!

Personality: This character is excitable, naive, and not all that attentive to detail. Though he might skip over important facts, like the librarian's name, he tells you exactly what he feels and conveys the sense that things are happening right now.

Techniques: Use long, run-on sentences. Forget the occasional important detail, like the librarian's name. Use verbal expressions (like "what's his name") that you wouldn't normally see written down. When reading the log aloud, speak quickly, like you're on the verge of hyperventilating.

Character Types: Halflings, rogues, starting characters.

CONCEITED

Always the center of the action, the character who keeps the log is, in his

own mind at least, the most important part of the group.

Sample: With companions in tow, I went to the catacombs, where creatures I later dubbed "hive rats" waited to attack us. I bore the brunt of the attacks, shielding the others from harm. Inside a coffin I beheld a skeleton. I told the priest to work his magic, and he confirmed my suspicions: It was the librarian who had slain this, his father. I swore he would learn the cost of misleading me.

Personality: Domineering and egotistical, this character sees himself as the center of the universe. He's fun to play, but you must be careful not to overdo it and make the other PCs wish for his early demise.

Techniques: Use the word "I" as often as possible and "we" infrequently, if at all. Instead of mentioning others by name, use descriptive terms like "the priest." Call the group "my companions" instead of "the party." If someone else does something noteworthy, take credit for inspiring them. Pretend to have known everything in advance.

Character Types: Elves, clerics, paladins, wizards.

SUB-LITERATE

One of the easiest styles to use, introducing intentional errors and strange sentence structure allows this style to provoke easy laughs.

Sample: Bookworm Man told us to go down into a tunnel filled with dead people. Rat things came at us, and I killed lots of them. Elf priest made a dead man talk, and it said Bookworm Man was bad. I could have told everybody that. So next we go crack his head.

Personality: This is the log of your classic big, dumb guy. He might not fully understand what's going on, but he knows who needs thrashing, and he knows how to do it.

Techniques: Short, basic sentences are the key. Present details in an amusingly vague manner. Instead of proper names, use simple, descriptive nicknames. When in doubt, ask yourself how the Incredible Hulk would say it.

Character Types: Half-orcs, barbarians, monsters, characters with a low Intelligence.

TERSE

The less said about this style, the better.

Sample: Bellero sent us into the catacombs, where we fought hive rats and found his father's corpse. Tuvo got the corpse to talk. It said Bellero had killed him.

Personality: This writer is a tough-minded fellow who doesn't believe in wasting words or fancying things up. His journal is a bare-bones reminder of past events.

Techniques: Use short, snappy sentences. Describe events in flat, neutral terms, without evoking emotions or drawing conclusions. Use proper names.

Character Types: Dwarves, fighters, rangers.

VIVID

The wordiest of the example styles, the vivid style uses careful description to make a clear picture of the adventure's course.

Sample: We lowered ourselves into the cold and darkened catacomb, the smell of wet moss rising in our nostrils. Long-bodied, slime-slicked rats boiled out of a large paper hive, like hornets would nest in. They shrieked toward us. We fought them off and cracked open a coffin we found there. Inside lay a moldering corpse. Tuvo lit incense and chanted, and it rose up and told us it was Bellero, father to the librarian, Utherl. "My son cruelly slew me," the corpse groaned, his ghostly voice rattling our bones.

Personality: This character feels things intensely. He keenly remembers details, especially sensory ones.

Techniques: Take a few key episodes and describe them in the close detail a writer of fiction would use. Evoke emotion by specifying the smells, sights, sounds, and temperature of the environment. Vary the length of sentences. Recount events accurately, except for the occasional exaggeration of the mood. Quote snippets of dialogue.

Character Types: Elves, bards, druids, rogues.

YOU: [After a moment's thought] "The stench of the hideous hive rats still reverberates in the innermost recesses of my nasal passages. I remember it like it was yesterday . . ."

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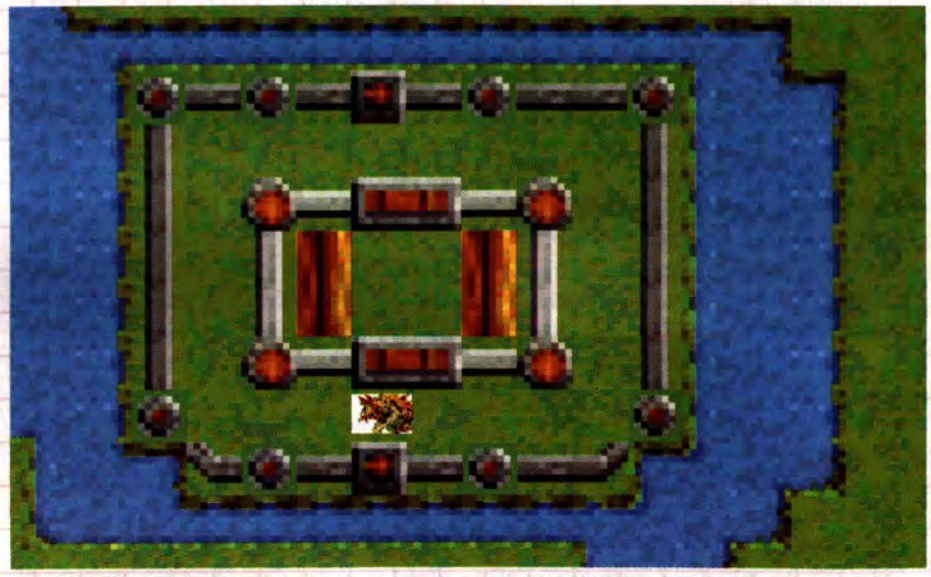
by Johnny L. Wilson

PC GUIDE TO STRONGHOLD BUILDING

There are few things more impressive to a D&D player than a well-drawn schematic or a detailed, functional illustration of the site in which the next adventure is going to occur. Unfortunately, DMs are not created equally when it comes to artistic ability. For stronghold and castle building, today's computer games offer several ways to present impressive graphics. These tools let players convey the plans for their character's stronghold and allow DMs to quickly generate maps.

An additional advantage to using computer software to design castle and stronghold diagrams is that most of the games on the market use program restraints that tie to historical reality. By playing through the game, you might pick up a few lessons from reality that add verisimilitude to your gaming experience.

Before relying on any software, make sure you can get reliable screenshots. See the sidebar below for some quick advice. Once you have the screenshot, the fun begins. Take the foundation diagram, open it in your favorite paint program, and then either print or manipulate the castle designs from that program.



Show and Tell

Technical Note: Once you have the ideal castle situation depicted on the screen, you need to find a way to present it to your DM or, if you are the DM, to your players. If you are using a tool like *The Elder Scrolls: Morrowind Construction Set* or *Stronghold*, you can use *Hyper-Snap Deluxe*, a bargain-priced shareware program (www.hyperionics.com, $25.00) to grab any screen. If you don't mind a slight colorshift, you can use the built-in Windows "Print Screen" utility for both of these games. If you are using an older game like *Lord of the Realms, Castles, Castles II*, or *Lord of Realms II*, you'll need to use *SnagIt 6*, another shareware program (www.techsmith.com, $39.95) that is invaluable for grabbing DOS screenshots.

THE LAYERED APPROACH

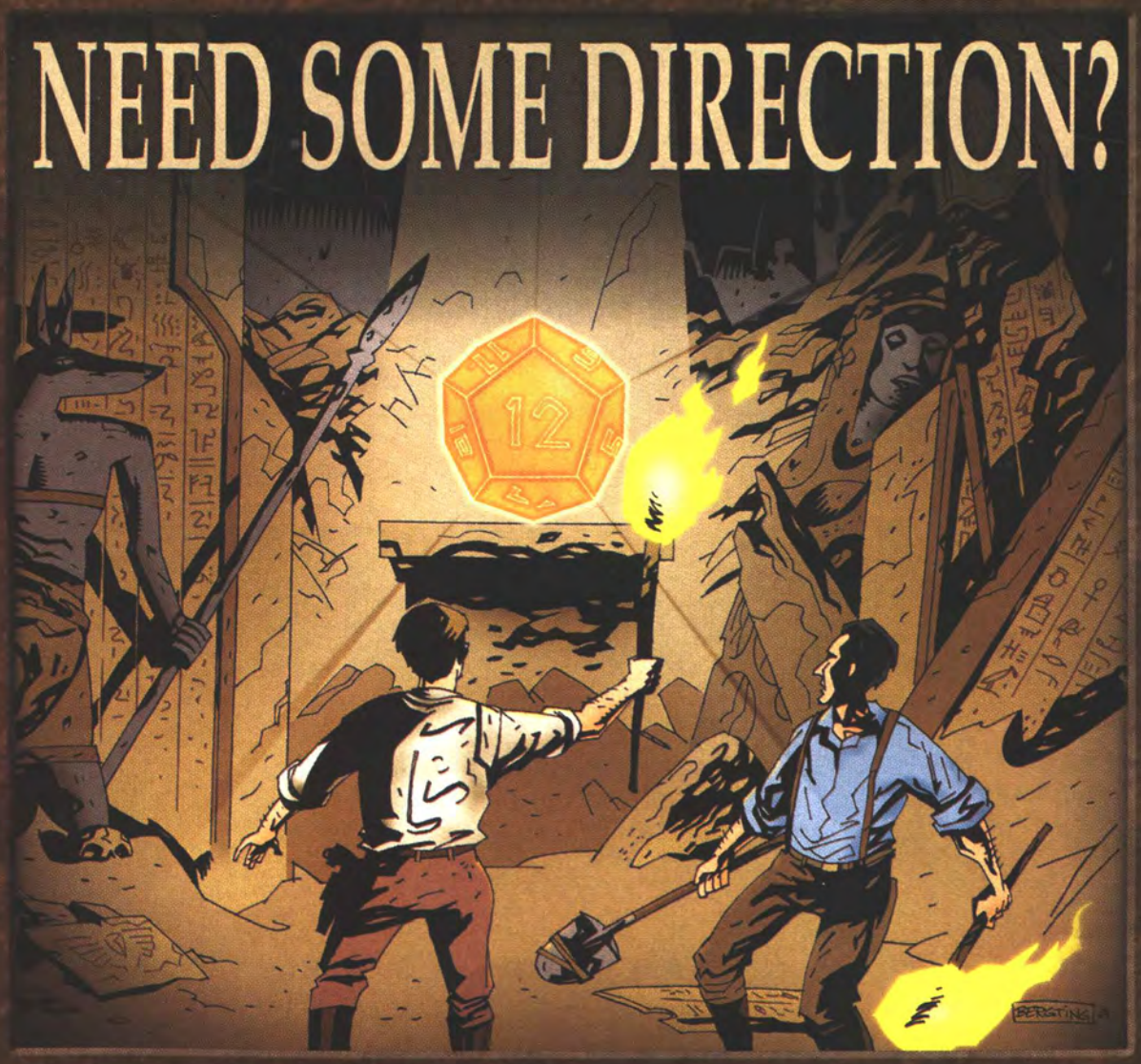
Some quick work with most castle-building utilities is enough to create a diagram of your castle's basic structure. Using this diagram as a map makes it easier for you to offer layered intelligence on the castle. A captured spy or former citizen could provide the map as printed. A quick scouting mission by an eagle companion or flying ship might garner the position of siege engines, sentries, and other defenses. With the digital diagram, you can plop in letters and symbols (even scanned monster chits) to represent the amount of detail garnered by Spot checks. You can prepare these in advance and have them printed out and sorted by Spot check result so that you can give out the right diagram according to each player's Spot check.

Another advantage to having multiple maps showing the castle diagram involves the mining and countermining scenario. Since one of the primary means of weakening a castle's defenses was to dig under a corner of an unfortified section of wall and cause the tunnel (and consequently, the castle) to collapse, some defenders chose to attempt a countermining technique. They would listen (at a high Listen DC, of course) and observe (with a high Spot DC) where mining might be taking place. Then, they would start tunneling toward the miners. An armed force would be behind the tunnelers and would, hopefully, ambush the miners and both kill

DC DOES IT

The above pictures show how different screenshots can represent different Spot check results.

NEED SOME DIRECTION?



Has your game got the blahs? Are your players spending more time thumbing through your book collection than hunting down clues, more energy heckling one another than in crushing their cruel foes? Never fear, o beleaguered Game Masters, for Robin D. Laws, noted game designer (***Feng Shui***, ***Hero Wars***, ***Dying Earth***, ***Rune***) and columnist for *Dragon* magazine, is here to help.

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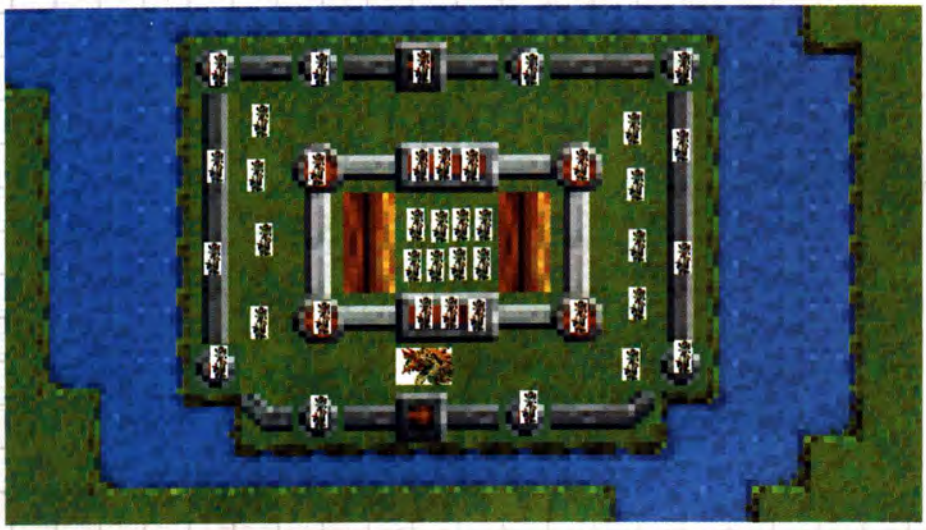

GOING TO SEED

Stronghold's map editor allows you to change terrain down to the type of vegetation, rocks/hills, and streams/rivers/seas.

SEE, SPOT, FIGHT

The foundation diagram can be captured and enlarged prior to manipulating it in a paint program and adding monsters, units, weapons, and features according to the PCs' Spot checks.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Sharpened wooden posts surrounded many early motte and bailey castles. *Stronghold* allows you to create a close-up view of such a defense to show your adventurers before they fireball it into oblivion and surprise the foes behind such a fence.

them and set traps (like the Greek Fire blown on invaders at Dyrrachium). By having multiple maps, there can be an intriguing double-blind game where the DM marks the NPCs attempt to mine and the PCs mark the direction of their countermining (or vice-versa). At other times, the defenders can mark on one map where they would erect a palisade to contain the invaders after a breach, and the invaders can mark the site of their intended breach on another. In this case, the scenario would probably play out like the siege of Carcassone (France) in 1240 where the defenders isolated the besiegers inside a second, temporary walled area. Naturally, the commander of the invaders indicates on a separate map where his forces (be they NPCs or PCs) attempt to breach the wall

As a bonus feature, *Stronghold* allows you to edit entire maps. You can raise and lower hills, add forests, select trees and vegetation, delineate wildlife, and place rocks, rivers, and seas wherever you like. You can use the map editor screen to give a 2D map of the terrain or load your custom map as a Free Build scenario and take 3D snapshots of the terrain. You can't place monsters in the 3D view, but you can use the 2D map to place traps and monsters as described with the castle diagrams above. As a bonus, all of the games mentioned in this article have interesting prefabricated castle designs, as well as intriguing scenarios that can be adapted to your D&D campaign.

FOR THE ARTISTICALLY CHALLENGED

In short, existing software programs can help the artistically-challenged DM or player. Screenshots, particularly when manipulated, can assist parties in visualizing situations and scenarios involving castles. Playing the strategy games surrounding some of these games can help DMs flesh out the rationales and cultures behind their castles. Of course, like any software solution, the options are limited only by the imagination of the user.

STRONGHOLD BUILDING TOOLS

If you're interested in using your computer to design castles and other strongholds, the following games should prove helpful:

Bard's Tale Construction Set (Interplay)
Castles 1 & 2 (Interplay)
The Elder Scrolls: Morrowind
Lords of the Realm I & II
Stronghold
Unlimited Adventures (SSI)

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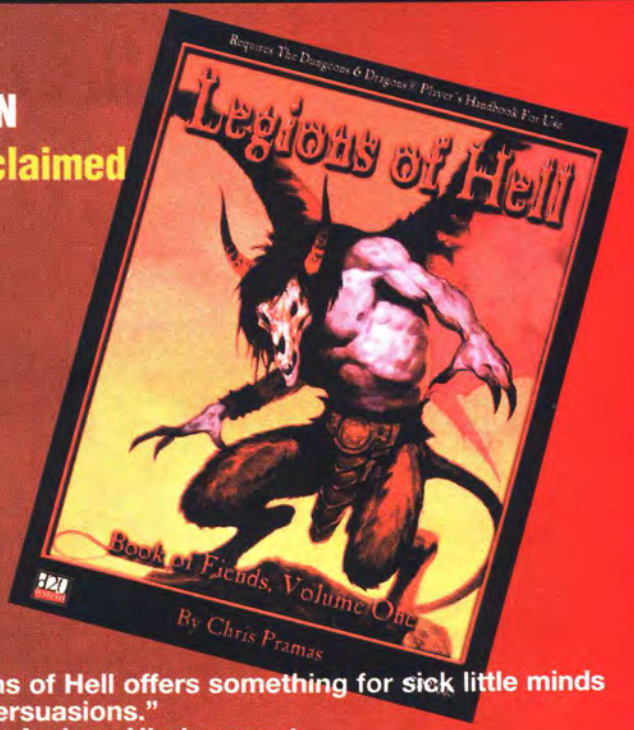

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This month, the Sage continues last month's look at combat in the D&D game and offers a few new procedures for handling those oddball combat situations that arise from time to time.

What's the procedure for attacking a character's armor or shield? Suits of armor and shields grant armor bonuses, but what are their own Armor Classes? What are their hit points?

You can attack a character's shield using the rules for striking a weapon in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*. This requires an opposed attack roll against the character wielding the shield, and there is a modifier for the size of the shield, as noted on page 136 of the *Player's Handbook*.

If you attack a shield that no one is using, the procedure is a little different. Use the rules for attacking inanimate objects on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*. A shield's base Armor Class is 10, plus a modifier for size as shown on Table 8–11 in the *Player's Handbook*. As noted on page 136 of the *Player's Handbook*, treat a buckler as a Small object (AC 11), a small shield as a Medium-sized object (AC 10), a large shield as a Large object (AC 9), and a tower shield as a Huge object (AC 8).

Like any other inanimate object, an unattended shield has no Dexterity score and has a Dexterity modifier to Armor Class of -5 (see page 135 in the *Player's Handbook*). Note that you get a +4 attack bonus when you attack an immobile object with a melee weapon, and if you spend a round lining up the attacks, you get an automatic hit with a melee weapon and a +5 bonus with a ranged weapon.

Table 8–13 in the *Player's Handbook* shows hardness and hit points for shields.

When a creature wears a suit of armor, you cannot attack the armor without attacking the wearer (although some creatures have special attacks that get around this limitation).

To determine the Armor Class for a suit of unattended armor, use Table 8–11 in the *Player's Handbook*, as noted above for shields. The armor's size is the same size as the kind of creature for which it was made (a suit of armor made for a dwarf, elf, or human would be a Medium-size object for the purpose of attacking it). Otherwise, attacking an unattended suit of armor is just like attacking an unattended shield or other inanimate object.

As an object, armor has a hardness appropriate to its construction: 10 for metal, 5 for leather or hide, and 0 for padded armor. (Treat studded leather as leather.) Armor has 5 hit points per point of armor bonus the armor provides.

On a normal disarm attempt, you and the target make opposed checks using a melee attack. But what if you're trying to knock a wand out of a wizard's hand? Would the wizard make a roll using only his Dexterity modifier?

Use opposed attack rolls for any disarm attempts (the better you are at combat, the harder it is to take things away from you).

If the target of the disarm is not a weapon, and the target is something that the defender has in hand or carries on a belt or other fairly accessible place, the attacker makes an attack roll against the item first. (A normal disarm attempt against a weapon doesn't require an initial attack roll, but that is because the weapon is assumed to be in use and pretty easy to strike.) Use the rules for attacking inanimate objects on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*. The item's Armor Class depends on its size, as shown on Table 8–11; remember that a held, worn, or carried object uses the wielder's Dexterity modifier to Armor Class (instead of its own -5 penalty) and gains the benefit of any deflection bonus to Armor Class that the wielder has.

If the initial attack strikes the object, make an opposed attack roll to see if the defender drops the item.

If the item being worn is particularly well secured to the defender's body (such as a ring), an attacker probably can't knock it loose with a melee attack. In this case, you have to attempt a grapple and take the item. Use the normal grappling procedure. If you start a round and have your opponent pinned (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook*) you can then attempt a grapple check to take any item the opponent wears or carries. The item's size modifier to Armor Class (from table 8–11 in the *Player's Handbook*) applies as a modifier to your opponent's opposed roll. If you win the opposed roll, you take the item from the opponent. You can't take away an item this way unless the opponent wears or carries it someplace where you can reach it. For example, you cannot dig an item out of the bottom of a foe's pack. You can, however, yank off the opponent's pack and then search it.

I am wondering about a 10-foot pole. On a square grid map, do you reach two squares diagonally from your location? Do you reach two squares in every direction? Also, how much of your speed does diagonal movement take up?

When counting diagonals, the first (and all odd diagonals) is 5 feet and the second (and all even diagonals) is 10 feet. You'd need a reach of 15 feet to attack two diagonals away (but only a 20-foot reach to attack 3 diagonals away). Likewise, if you move three diagonals, your total movement would be 20 feet.

Suppose a character has the Improved Initiative feat, giving him a +4 bonus to initiative rolls, while another character has the Quick Draw feat, letting him draw weapons as a free action instead of a full-round action. Now, when the combat round is announced and the characters roll for initiative, who goes first? Does the character with the Quick Draw feat have to roll for initiative, or will his feat suffice and give him the first action?

First, note that without the Quick Draw feat, you draw a weapon as move-equivalent action, not a full-round action. If your base attack bonus

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DRAGON®

POWER PLAY

Soften Them Up by Stephen Schubert

Many spells of 4th level and above, such as *phantasmal killer*, result in the target's death if the saving throw is failed, but if it is made, then little or nothing results. Before casting *disintegrate, destruction,* or *finger of death,* use other spells or actions to weaken the target. For example, *enervation* and *prayer* both do not allow a save, and both apply at least a -1 penalty on saving throws. If a target has a low Will save, then *doom* or *bestow curse* can significantly hamper her, with -2 and -4 to saves, respectively. Even an item as mundane as a tanglefoot bag can reduce saving throws, in this case an effective -2 on Reflex saves due to the -4 Dexterity penalty.

is +1 or higher, you can draw a weapon while taking a move action, but you still wind up using at least one move action before you get your weapon out (see "Sage Advice" in issue #275 or the D&D FAQ).

The character with the higher initiative acts first. Quick Draw lets you draw a weapon as a free action, you can only take a free action when it's your turn, and the only way to know when it's your turn is to roll initiative.

Suppose a character makes a trip attempt against a foe who is flat-footed. Now, the foe loses her Dexterity modifier against the melee touch attack that the attacker makes as part of the trip attack, but does she also lose her Strength modifier when resolving the trip attempt (assuming that the melee touch attack succeeds)? Normally, one can resist a trip attempt with either a Strength or Dexterity check. Is using Dexterity an option if you're caught flat-footed? Similar questions arise when trying to grapple, bull rush, and disarm flat-footed opponents.

Being flat-footed negates your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, but it does not affect your ability to make opposed rolls. Your ability to react to danger is somewhat compromised when flat-footed, but only slightly. For example, you become subject to sneak attacks, but you make saving throws (even Reflex saving throws) normally. If you're caught flat-footed and an opponent attempts to trip you, you lose your Dexterity bonus (assuming you have one) to Armor Class against the initial touch attack, but you make the ensuing opposed roll normally. You still can use either Dexterity or Strength for your opposed roll. (The attacker always uses Strength.)

The same is true for grappling: You lose your Dexterity bonus against the grab, but you make a normal opposed roll against the hold.

Bull rushing and disarming don't require initial attack rolls against the targets, so it isn't any easier to carry out these actions against flat-footed opponents than it is against more active foes.

If I have a *+2 mighty [Str 14] composite longbow*, does the bow's +2 enhancement bonus and the Strength bonus stack or not? Does it apply to both my attack and damage rolls?

Strength bonuses do not apply to ranged attack rolls, no matter what ranged weapon you use. Strength bonuses apply to damage from thrown weapons and to damage from mighty bows.

A mighty bow's enhancement bonus applies to any damage an arrow from the bow deals, and that stacks with your Strength bonus, up to the limit the bow allows; in this case, up to +2. Note that a mighty bow does not provide a Strength bonus, it just allows you to use your Strength bonus, so you'd need a Strength score of 14 or more to get the mighty bow's +2 Strength bonus to damage.

In general, two or more different bonus types that affect the same thing stack. See Combining Magical Effects in Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook* and Bonuses From Magic in Chapter 8 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Strength bonuses and other ability score bonuses are not "magical" bonuses, but they follow the same stacking rules that apply to other bonuses.

How far can someone throw something that is not a weapon? How much damage would a hit with such an object deal?

Here's an informal system the Sage worked up for throwing things. It's offered to readers of "Sage Advice" for commentary and playtesting.

You can throw an item that weighs up to one third your light load rating as an improvised thrown weapon. Your light load rating depends on your Strength score and size, as shown on Table 9–1 in the *Player's Handbook*. Improvised thrown weapons are discussed on page 97 of the *Player's Handbook*. Remember that nobody is proficient with an improvised thrown weapon, and an attack with an improvised thrown weapon suffers a -4 nonproficiency penalty. You can throw the item with one hand, provided it is no larger or heavier than what would be a one-handed weapon for you (see page 97 in the *Player's Handbook*). Medium-sized weapons (which Medium-sized creatures can wield one-handed), for example, range from clubs to dwarven waraxes. Anything bigger than what would be a one-handed weapon for you must be thrown with two hands and the throw requires a full-round action.

If you want to throw an object that's heavier than one third your light load, you cannot use it as a weapon. Instead, you make a Strength check to lob it near your target in the hopes of doing some damage. The result of the check determines the distance you throw the object, according to the guidelines below. If the item does not exceed your light load rating, triple the distance you can throw it as figured by the guidelines below. If the item exceeds your light load rating but does not exceed your medium load rating, double the distance as figured by the guidelines below.

For a running throw (at least 10 feet of movement toward your target), you throw the item 5 feet +1 foot per point your Strength check exceeds 10.

For a standing throw, you can throw the item 5 feet +1 foot per 2 points your Strength check exceeds 10.

If the item exceeds your maximum load rating but is not heavier than what you can lift, 5 feet is the maximum distance you can throw the item (but see below); you can't throw what you can't lift. For these heavy objects, don't bother with an attack roll. Just have

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d20 system

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the thrower pick a spot for the object to land.

If the Strength check result is too low to reach the target spot, the DM should pick one that's on a straight line between the thrower and the target spot. All such heavy objects require two hands to throw and thus throwing them is a full-round action.

In all such cases, use the deviation diagrams on page 69 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* to see where the item really lands (assume a range increment of 10 feet). It's possible that the deviation roll will make the item travel slightly father than the Strength roll indicates. If the throw was only 5 feet, do not roll for deviation.

A creature in the object's landing space gets a Reflex save (DC 15 + the thrower's Strength modifier) to avoid the object.

Damage from an improvised thrown weapon or a larger thrown item is equal to the thrower's unarmed strike damage or 1d6 points per 200 pounds of weight (which is the minimum for a falling object of that weight, see page 89 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), whichever is higher.

Here are a few numbers that illustrate the effects of this system:

A human with a Strength score of 12 throws a 16-pound bowling ball, on average, 18 feet on a standing throw and 21 feet on a running throw. Maximum on the standing throw is 40 feet, and maximum on the running throw is 50 feet.

At 4th level, Krusk, the half-orc barbarian (Strength 18), can throw a full keg of beer (160 pounds) 14 feet standing and 18 feet running. Maximum distances are 24 feet and 38 feet respectively.

A 20th-level Tordek (Strength 30) can throw his warhorse (1,400 pounds) 10 feet standing and 15 feet running. Maximum distances are 20 feet and 35 feet respectively.

I know that you can't cast spells that require somatic or material components while you're being grappled. Suppose I have the Still Spell feat, or I'm casting a spell that only has a verbal component, and I cast a spell while being grappled. Does the opponent who is grappling me get an attack of opportunity against me when I cast the spell? Do I provoke an attack of opportunity from a non-grappling enemy in a square next to me (say the grappler's buddy, who is standing by to prevent just such a thing)? How many Concentration checks do I have to make to pull off this action?

Actually, you can cast a spell with a material component while you're being grappled or pinned, you just have to have the material component in hand before you cast the spell (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook*). Under normal circumstances, you can get a material component out of a pocket or a spell component pouch as part of your spell-casting action. To have a component in your hand when being grappled or pinned, you either must have previously told the DM that you were holding the component, or you have to take an action to retrieve the component. This is similar to retrieving a stored item, but it is a full-round action when you're grappled. It provokes an attack of opportunity (but see below), and it's not possible if you're pinned.

When you cast the spell (or retrieve the necessary component), you provoke an attack of opportunity, but not from the foe who is grappling you. When you're involved in a grapple, you don't threaten any area (see page 138 in the *Player's Handbook*). Any foes who threaten you while you're being grappled (such as an enemy standing apart from the grapple) make attacks of opportunity normally against you.

In this situation, you need to make a Concentration check with a DC of 20 + the spell level to cast a spell while grappled, and possibly a second check with a DC of 10 + spell level + the damage dealt if your grappler's ally hits you with an attack of opportunity. Make one check and apply the roll to both DCs. If you aren't successful with both checks, you lose the spell. You can attempt to cast defensively in this situation, if you do, you also make one check and compare the result to the defensive casting (DC 15 + spell level) and the DC for casting while grappling (DC of 20 + spell level).

Some classes start off with proficiency in an exotic weapon, and some of those weapons may be used as either martial or exotic weapons. For example, the samurai from the *Oriental Adventures* book is proficient with the katana. Does

THE UNSPEAKABLE OAF **by John Kovalic**

a character using such a weapon start off with the martial or exotic level of proficiency in such a weapon?

Exotic, unless the class description specifically notes otherwise.

The retriever (a creature from the *Monster Manual*) has eye rays for a special attack. How are these supposed to work? The creature's statistics mention a ranged touch attack, but there is a saving throw DC mentioned in the descriptive text for the rays. Do the characters get a saving throw on top of first being targeted by the ranged touch attacks? If so, then the retriever should not roll to hit, should it? If not, then the damage is a little powered up, isn't it?

The retriever makes an attack roll, and if the ray hits, the target attempts the listed save—all ray attacks that allow saves work this way. Not all of a retriever's eye rays allow saves. The fire ray does not allow a saving throw to a creature struck by the ray, but the ray also deals damage to creatures within 5 feet of the target, and those creatures get Reflex saving throws for half damage. The cold and electricity rays allow no saves. The petrification ray allows a Fortitude save to avoid being turned to stone.

The retriever's eye rays are indeed formidable. Keep in mind that a retriever can use only 2 rays each round and that the individual rays function only once every 6 rounds. In most encounters, a retriever will use each ray once.

What happens to a ray effect when it misses? Is there a chance that the ray will hit something else? Do you have to see your target to make a ray attack, or can you fire blindly at an invisible target or at one concealed in fog or darkness?

As noted in the previous question, you make a ranged attack roll when you use a ray. What happens to a ray that misses depends on why it misses. If you shoot a ray effect and simply fail the attack roll, the ray does not hit a thing. You cannot, for example, accidentally blow a hole in the ceiling if you miss with a *disintegrate* spell.

A ray (or other spell that uses a ranged attack roll) follows all the rules that govern ranged attacks, including the rule that says you can strike cover instead of a missed target (see page 133 in the *Player's Handbook*). Note that this rule applies only when your target has cover and you miss the target because of that cover. Even though you won't accidentally blow a hole in the ceiling when you miss with a *disintegrate* spell, you might accidentally blow a hole in whatever your target might be trying to use for cover.

You can indeed shoot a ray or other ranged touch spell blindly. You pick a space to attack, just as if you were attacking an invisible creature (see pages 78-79 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Anything in that space has total concealment. If the effect misses—either because you fail the miss chance or because you fail the attack roll—the effect hits nothing. The ray or other effect dissipates harmlessly somewhere in the space where you directed the ray. Note that very large targets might not get the full benefit of total concealment, as noted in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Do the miss chances for *blink* and *displacement* stack? I know that two bonuses of the same type rarely stack; however, the *blink* spell description says the spell provides a 50% miss chance because the target might not be physically present when the attack strikes. *Displacement* has the same 50% miss chance; however the miss chance is based on the premise that the target is a short distance from where it appears to be. So, if a target is attacked when under the effects of *blink* and *displacement*, would the DM need to resolve both of the miss chances provided by each of the spells?

While it's true that two or more miss chances from concealment don't stack (just use the best one), the *blink* spell does not use concealment. If a blinking character also has concealment (from a *displacement* spell, *blur* spell, *invisibility*, or some other effect or circumstance), both miss chances apply. The miss chances do not stack, you must check each separately. The attack misses if the attacker fails either miss chance. It's usually best to check the *blink* miss chance first, since things such as the Blind-Fight feat are not effective against *blink*.

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PHIL FOGLIO'S WHAT'S NEW WITH PHIL & DIXIE

EVERY VILLAIN NEEDS A CASTLE. OH, I SUPPOSE YOU **COULD** RUN YOUR ORGANIZATION FROM YOUR TABLE IN THE GAMESHOP AT THE MALL, BUT IF YOU WANT TO BE TAKEN **SERIOUSLY**- GET A **CASTLE**!

OF COURSE, FINDING THE **RIGHT** CASTLE CAN BE DIFFICULT...

ARE YOU **SURE** YOU WANT THIS CASTLE FOR YOUR ORDER, YOUR HOLINESS? IT'S ON CURSED GROUND, IT HAS **MASSIVE** DUNGEONS, AND SACRIFICIAL ALTARS IN **EVERY** ROOM!

OH YES - IT ALMOST SOUNDS AS GOOD AS THE ONE USED BY THE BLOOD SOAKED CULT OF THE ALWAYS CORRECT FISH.

...IT **WAS** THEIR CASTLE, THEY GOT CLEANED OUT BY ADVENTURERS LAST WEEK.

PERFECT! DID THEY LEAVE THEIR MAILING LIST?

REAL ESTATE

COMMERCIAL HOME FANATIC

OWNING A CASTLE ENHANCES YOUR REPUTATION...

Y'BOUGHT YON CASTLE?! SWIT **JAYSUS**, Y' MOOST BE A **BRAVE** MON!

OH AYE, AND A **FIGHTER**. THE LAST OWNER WAS A NINJA MASTER AN' **HE** WAS **DEAD** A'FOR **MIDNIGHT**!

BAH! IT TAKES AN EDUCATED MAN O' **SCIENCE** T' IGNORE ALL THA' CLAPTRAP ABOOT CURSES, N' DEMONS, N' GHOSTS, N' PORTALS T' HELL, N' ELDER GODS N' SOOCH.

ACTUALLY, I WAS HOPING TO BE THOUGHT A SMART SHOPPER.

BRANDY

CASTLE: CHEAP

A CASTLE HAS ATMOSPHERE. OWNING ONE INFLUENCES A PERSON'S THINKING.

I AM THE **MASTER** OF THIS CASTLE! MASTER OF ALL I SURVEY! THE PEASANTS ARE LIKE **SHEEP** - AND SHEEP SHOULD BE **SHORN**! BWAHAHAHAHA!!

OF COURSE WITH **SOME** PEOPLE, IT DOESN'T **TAKE** MUCH.

A CASTLE GIVES YOU A FEELING OF SECURITY. IT'S **DESIGNED** TO KEEP ENEMIES **OUT**...

WELL, THE DRAWBRIDGE IS UP, THE WINDOWS ARE BARRED, AND THE FIRE MOAT IS LIT. SO HOWS ABOUT YOU AND ME-

HELLO DAUGHTER! I'M HERE FOR A VISIT! WHERE'S THE FRIDGE?

- THEORETICALLY.

AND FINALLY- OWNING A CASTLE GIVES YOU **INCENTIVE**.

MY PLAN IS TO CRACK THE ROYAL TREASURY. BUT IT WILL TAKE **PATIENCE**! OVER THE NEXT TWO MONTHS WE WILL OBSERVE THE CASH TRANSFER PROCEDURES AS WELL AS THE GUARDS' SCHEDULES, THEN-

KNOCK

...YES?

PACKAGE FOR YOU SIR- IT'S THIS MONTHS HEATING BILL.

PREPARE THE MOLE MACHINE!! THE TREASURY FALLS TONIGHT!!

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Huf!

Official Dungeons & Dragons® campaign setting supplement: The *Kingdoms of Kalamar*™ Player's Guide

July 27
Once again, half the party was killed trying to cross the Kurgo River outside the abandoned keep in Tarisato. That petty warlord's really becoming a thorn in our side. Whenever we take action, he uses his political connections to thwart us. It's so real; it's like the setting is alive. We definitely need an edge.

July 29
Stopped by the game store today and saw the Kingdoms of Kalamar Player's Guide had arrived. I looked through it in the store and was very impressed. I picked up a copy and I think this might be the answer to all our problems.

August 3
The Player's Guide rules. There are a bunch of new official D&D classes and prestige classes. My new character is going to be a Thokki Shaman from Torakk named Thokken. The Shaman class ROCKS! He gets to choose an animal for his totem– then he can shapechange into that animal. I'm still undecided on my feats and skills; there are over seventy new ones. On top of it all, there are a bunch of new spells, new equipment and new armor. The best part is that every word is OFFICIAL Dungeons & Dragons so I can use this book in my Forgotten Realms and Greyhawk campaigns as well. Bonus!

August 17
Victory for the Crusaders of the Eagle's Nest! I finally decided on the Eagle as my totem, and it saved the day. Thokken flew ahead of the party and created a diversion, allowing everyone else to make it across the bridge in safety. Once there, we circled to surprise the enemy and win the day. Without my shaman, the others' new feats and spells would not have been nearly as effective. Thokken rules!

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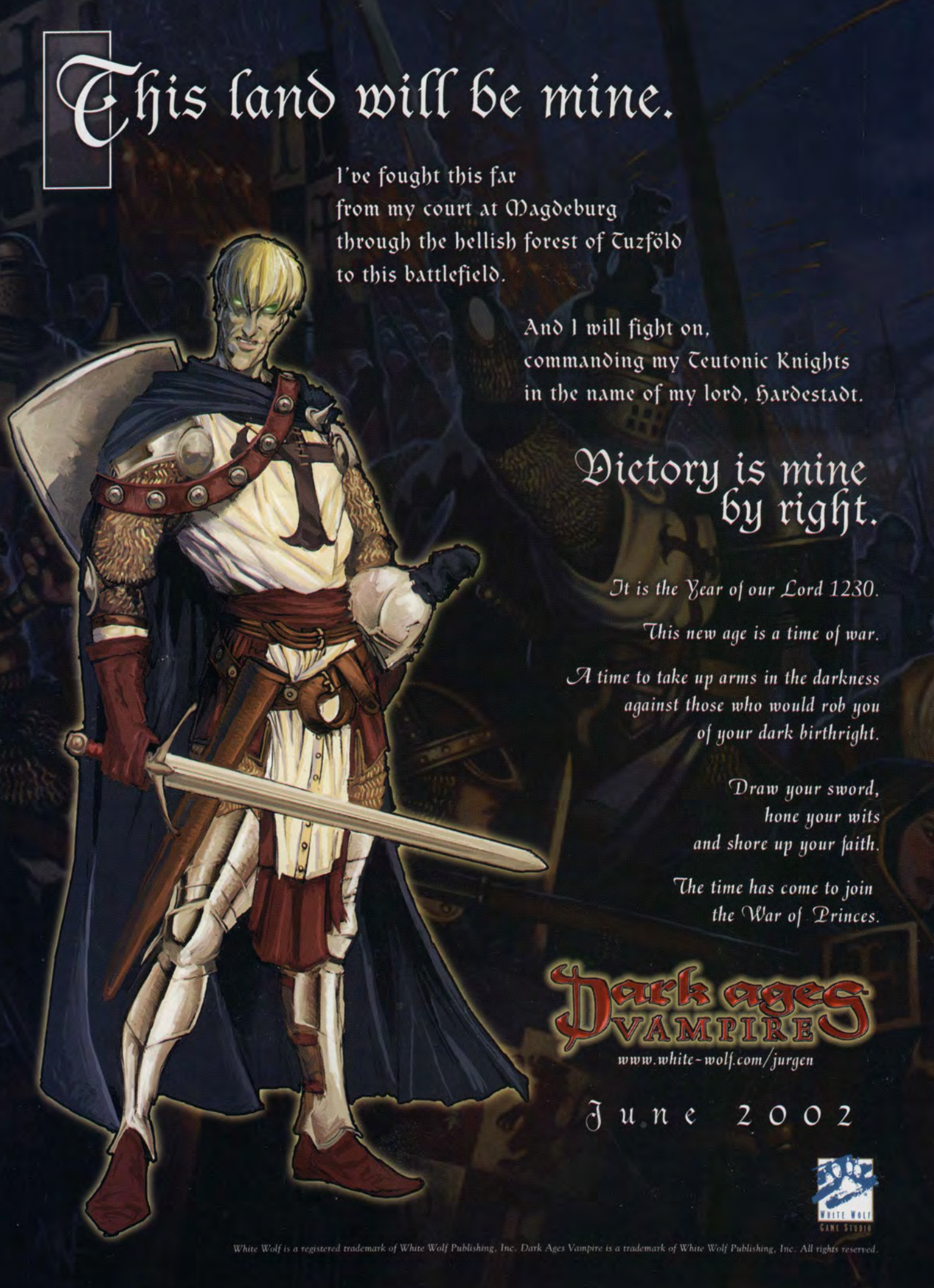
This land will be mine.
I've fought this far
from my court at Magdeburg
through the hellish forest of Tuzföld
to this battlefield.
And I will fight on,
commanding my Teutonic Knights
in the name of my lord, Hardestadt.
Victory is mine
by right.
It is the Year of our Lord 1230.
This new age is a time of war.
A time to take up arms in the darkness
against those who would rob you
of your dark birthright.
Draw your sword,
hone your wits
and shore up your faith.
The time has come to join
the War of Princes.
Dark ages
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June 2002
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